

# Program Notes, 1946 - 1962

From top down

1. Bound Notes, 1950-55 + 1955, 56
2. Loose notes to file in labeled folders
3. Labeled (dated) folders

## D I V I D E R

4. Notes after Stauffacher

Memo From Haller:

I have kept this material in order I found it except by dividing the Stauffacher years (on top) and the post-Stauffacher years (on bottom).

Everything in box was out of order when I went through it.

5. some contracts + rental correspondence from post-Stauffacher years





3000 1500 2000

## Rakestraw - 5-8-47

- ① Program selection - tailored to audience.
- ② 50 centers - West Coast
- ③ Tenney committee
- ④ Art dept. came - all liked it.
- ⑤ Charge overhead for program notes, etc. planning, ~~program~~ editing, selection.
- ⑥ Depository & shipping exchange for a small fee for M M A films on west coast.
- ⑦ Names of subscribers to Berkeley series
- ⑧ Writing program notes - why picture is being shown & the background
- ⑨ Send announcements of catalogue to Rakestraw & comp. copy.
- ⑩ Have Mrs. Hamilton submit bill to University as follows:  
U. of C. Ext. ~~Div.~~ attn: Boyd Rakestraw
- ⑪ Elim. "employee" angle.



Done Today

① Saw Rabe straw

a) Billing

b) other news

c) out dept

d) Seite

② Saw father

③ met Bradley

④ Seite re a.m.c.  
of Stalinism

⑤ Harry Smith, in  
film

1251 days



## Outline for Art In Cinema Society

- ① Partnership - Foster & Stauffacher  
an equal div. of profits after individual  
expenses taken out.
- ② Get list of sponsors:  
Morley  
Varda  
Miller  
Leite  
Mac Agy
- ③ Get mailing list together from all people  
who have written in from outside  
+ inside mailing list.
- ④ Organization
  - a New showings + research work at  
Museum using art in Cinema Fund.
  - b Write M M A - Rosenheimer - & see  
if he would go along.
  - c Get distributorship from various



Leased  
GA 1671



~~\* Skylight~~

~~\* Oakland Tribune~~

~~\* View Magazine~~

~~\* Time Magazine~~

~~\* Harpers~~

~~\* Berkeley Gazette~~

① Review Copies

~~Kenyon~~  
~~Review~~

~~\* Design Magazine (Rohr)~~

~~\* Cinema (Stauffer)~~

~~(Chronicle) Frankenstein (Foster)~~

~~\* What's Doing Arthur Rosenheimer, Jr.,~~

② ~~Consignment copies~~

MMA

~~Quater Cinema League (Editor, Moore)~~

③ Distributors



artists

Richter

Fischinger

Whitneys

Arlidge

Harrington

Peterson

Harvey Smith

Deren

Crockerell

Man Ray

Jacobs

Bute-henneth

(d) The





## CIVILIAN PRODUCTION ADMINISTRATION

1355 Market Street  
San Francisco, California

Sample letter to reviewers

Signed by Dr. Morley

3 Series - sponsors

success - ~~overold~~ turn away people  
each showing - 450 - 900 capacity  
audience

well covered in local press  
museum is a center for this kind of ac-  
tivity - inviting young artists to send  
their work to A. I. C. Society for preview &  
possible inclusion on later programs -  
esp. cinema + "mod. avant garde" -  
growing edge.

A. I. C. Soc. - work mainly of two  
young men - F & S. S. ed. catalogue  
& col. mat. for prog. notes.



SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART  
ART IN CINEMA

ABSTRACT AND SURREALIST FILM SERIES

Films which were silent and which it was deemed necessary to provide musical accompaniment:

Skladanowsky Primitives: Ancient Jazz. Old German recordings on Vox label. Nr. 01482. both sides.

Don Juan's Wedding: Introduction and dinner music scene from Richard Strauss's "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" Brunswick Records: 90130-A; 90132-B; 90130-B; (Fencing Master portion to accompany the First Grace); 90131-B (Courante to accompany the Second Grace). From the Third Grace to finale of picture the following records in the following order; 90133-A; 90133-B 90134-A.

Misunderstood: The following records in order and repeated in any order desirable, no particular sequence necessary: Brunswick Gold Label 90133-A 90133-B 90134-A.

⊗ The Golem: Kodaly's "Hary Janos" sides 4 and 5 (Victor 11-9250-B, 11-9249-B).

The Cabinet of Doctor Caligary: The following records played in sequence with the interspersions noted below, such interspersions being of sequential length: Harris\*Benjamin Album: Sides 5-6-1-2-3. (record numbers: 11-9217-B, 11-9216-B, 11-9214-A, 11-9215-A, 11-9216-A) Toch, "Quintet for Strings", sides 1-2-3-5-6. (71153-D, 71154-D, 71155-D, 71156-D, 71155D). Igor Stravinsky, "Concerto in D Major" Brunswick Polydor, Nrs. 95005-A, 95003-B. (95003-B repeated if necessary.) Interspersions: All taken from Igor Stravinsky's "Petrouchka" Carnival: Sides 1. 2. (Victor, 16111-A, 16112-A) Fair: Sides 6-7. (Victor, 16113-B, 16112-B) Hut: and creature: Side 3, last part of Victor 16113-A. Sonambulist: side 4. (Victor 16114-A).

Smiling Madame Beudet: (Not all of the film was shown, therefore the recordings go only as far as the film was shown.)

Open with Darius Milhaud's "Suite Provinciale" side 2, part 1 (Vic. 11-8502-A). Thence to Debussy's "La Damselle Elue and Printemps" (Victor DM363) Play in order, side 8 (Vic. 12054-B), Side 1, to voices, (12051-A), Then sides 5-7-6-7. (Vic. 12053-A, 12054-A, 12053-B, 12054-A.).

Cinema (Entract): Open with Honneger "Concertino for Piano and Orchestra" Sides 1-2 (Vic. 8765-A and B) Milhaud's "Le Boeuf sur le Toit" (C-D15074-5); Funeral: Marche Funebre, from "Hamlet" Col. (68429-D); Marche; Mahler, Symphony Nr 1 Sides 6-7 (Col. 11611-D, 11612-D) When tempo becomes normal go to side 7 (Col 11612-D) When Chase begins play Milhaud's "Protee" Sides 2 and 6, side 6 repeated if necessary (Vic. 11-8981 A, 11-8980-B) End with Milhaud's "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, side 3. (Col. 68738.).

Menilmontant: Open with Prokofieff's "Sythian Suite" Sides 6 and 5. (Play only the first half inch of side 6. (DM 1040, 11-9091-B, and 11-9092-B) As soon as the murder sequence is over, ~~then~~ play from the album of "Solo Works for Solo Wind Instruments" Record No. 18101-B, while the children are shown. When the graves are shown, and the mourning sequence starts, play from the Miaskowsky "Symphonietta", the variations movement (Victor Record 12092-B and 12093-A) at the cut in of the city sequence play the first side of Tansman's "Tryptique for String Orchestra" (Vic. 11944-A). When the mood becomes quiet and The Man appears, play all through the subsequent scenes of the assignation and seduction, music from Hansen's "Romantic" Symphony (DM 648) sides in the following order, 2-4-6. (15954-A, 15956-A, 15955-B.) Where the girl is marking the wall, play again from "American Works for Solo Instruments". (This time, Record No. 18102-B) This should take up through the birth of the child. With the immediately following city sequence, this time in the rain, play sides 7 and 8 of the Hansen Symphony (15954-B, 15953-B). With the showing of the Abandoned in the Park sequence, play Howell's "Elegy" sides 1 and 2 (Col. 69751-D) With the



scene of the city at night play the Pierne "Impressions de Concert Hall" side 3. (Decca 25397-A) At the point where the child is given to the sister, play over part of side 2 of the Howell's "Elegy" (69751-D). When the final scene a murderous fight, begins, play side 1 of Prokofiev's "Sythian Suite" (DM 1040. 11-9091-A) I suggest that it be so timed that the long descending passage more or less comes to a conclusion at the same time as the film.

**Enak Bakia:** Any collection of early jazz will do. I happened to find some old popular records recorded in Germany about this period and they were sufficiently unknown to provide a little interest and at the same time not detract from the picture. I believe that the Continental Jazz Style would fit better in this film than the more familiar American types.

**Etoile de Mer:** For this picture, Man Ray suggested french popular music. The following selections were used. As to the order, the only important thing is to begin with "Je ne t'aime pas" (Polydor 522.988) and during the brief train sequence, use "Paris Mediterranee" (Polydor 524.355). ~~Otherwise the order is immaterial.~~ Polydor 524.355, "Paris Mediterranee" and "Un Jeune Homme Chantait." Polydor 524.513, "Elle Frequentait la Rue Pigale," and "Je n'en Connais pas la fin." Polydor 522.988, "Je ne t'aime pas," and "Complainte de la Seine."

**Uberfall:** Open with the first movement of the Sowerby "Symphony for Organ" (DM894). Play this straight through until the fight scene. Here start movement two and play that until the hospital scene at which time play the last part of side 6 (11-8148-B) the beginning of the Passacaglia. The film will end before the record finishes.

**Coquille et Clergyman:** Open with Kodaly "Dances from Galanta" (Vic. M 834) play sides 1 and 2. (13786-A and B) lead directly into the D'Indy "Symphony" (DM943) when side 2 of the Kodaly changes character. Play the D'Indy "Symphony in the following order: sides 1-2-3-4-5-6-9-7-8. Break in between sides 2 and 3 for the dance sequence. During this sequence play record 11-8976-A from the Bernstein "Jeremiah Symphony" (DM 1026)

**Drame Chez Les Fantoques:** For this short film play as much as possible of the Jean Francais "Trio" (Col. X 130. 69558-D, 69559-D)

**Gertie the Dinasaure:** Play the record "Song Fest" Victor 11-8453.

**Skeleton Dance:** Use the "Danse Macabre" of Saint Saens. Victor 14162-A and B.

**Rhythmus 21:** Play Shostakovitch "Preludes" Levant, Col. 17335-D (first part only) William Kappell, Victor 11-8824-B.

**Berlin:** Open with the Fanfare from William Walton's "Facade Suite" (Victor 12034-A) During the train sequence which follows immediately after the opening, play sides 6 and 7 of the Bartok Quartet No. 1 in A minor (M 286) Records 8844-B, 8845-A. With the quiet city in early morning which we see immediately after the arrival of the train into the city, play Bloch's "Schelomo" (DM698) in its entirety. Follow this up with the remaining portions of "Facade Suite". This should take us in the film up to the point where we see a large clock indicating the noon hour. The rest of the film use the Ravel "Valse Nobles et Sentimentales" (Victor 11727-11728) and the Ravel "Alborado del Gracioso" (Victor 8852 A and B) interrupted only by the suicide incident at which time play one of the more stormy sections from Schoenberg's "Pierre Lunaire" (Col MM 461). Return to the Ravel "Waltzes" and at the theatre sequence, play the "Charleston" (Victor No. 19727-B) From this point to the end, play popular music such as "Caravan" (Col. 36120)

**His Bitter Pill:** During this film, two records only were played. They were Victor 35774, "Danube Waves," and "Over the Waves," and Victor 36397, "Serenade" and "March of the Bowmen". The only correlation was that of playing the March of the Bowmen during the chase, fights, and other heroic sequences.

**Fall of the House of Usher:** Open with side 1 of Purcell "Suite" (Victor DM 533) be careful to skip the small section of the record which changes character and take it up again where the music is quiet. Lead directly to side 3 of the Faure "Pelleas et Melisande Suite" (Vic. DM941 11-8349-B). When "USHER" appears, play side 13 of M 446. the Sibelius "Intrada". This should take up to the dinner scene



(8)

During the dinner scene, and the painting sequence which follows, play sides 1-2-3 of the Schoenberg "Varklarte Nacht" (DM1005) this is broken into by only one sequence, and that is of the guitar playing. Here I suggest using a very classical guitar selection such as Bach or in this case the "Capricho" of Senz. (Col. 17076-D). Immediately after the death of the lady, play the Gregorian Chant recording of the "Dies Irae" (side 5 of Vic M 177) (Vic. 11530) repeat this until the coffin gets in the outside air and here play the part of side 5 of Rachmaninoff's "Isle of the Dead" which comes immediately after the climax about one inch in on the record. (Col. MM599, 12275-D) ~~Finish~~ *complete* the record side and then play side 14 of set M 446 (Sibelius' "Oak Tree") this section of the record is repeated until there is a return to the empty palace. Here play the Faure "Elegy" (Vic. 14577) and side 1 of the Howell's "Elegy" (Col. 69751-D). This should lead right in to the storm beginning at which time start the Arthur Bliss "Music for Strings" sides 2-4-3, in that order. (M 464, 12248-B, 12249-B, 12249-A) Repeat these until the fire begins and then play sides 5-6 of the Howard Hansen "Nordic Symphony" (01973, 11-4627-B, 11-4628-B) This will be sufficient to complete the film.

Anaemic Cinema: Music for this was played very softly and the titles were read over the public address system. Music used was the first two sides of the Howard Ferguson "Sonata in F Minor" (HMV C7580, C7581)

Un Chien Andalou: It was suggested by George Anthiel that Wagner be used. The Toscannini recording of Siegfried's Rhein Journey and Funeral March from "Die Gotterdammerung" happened to be the best thing available. Fortunately the timing worked out rather well, the funeral music being exactly suited to the mock funeral in the picture. Play the set straight through (Vic. DM 853.)

As can be seen from the above list, no attempt was made to make a scene for scene correlation of music and picture. The sensible thing to do was to try to establish the mood and supplement it with music. Short of having a sound track put to some of these silent films, this was the only practicable solution. Very few of the films, when viewed silently, had as much impact as they did with the music added. Probably the sound movies have pre-conditioned the audience of today to find music necessary for adequate reaction. Some of the films had musical scores written for them, but ~~they~~ *these scores* were unobtainable, consequently we had to treat these films much the same as those which were meant to be silent.

*Paul Velguth*

*ghosts Before Breakfast: M 361 - Tarantella. DB1304  
659 - Hindemith - Schwanendances  
3d record*



## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Without exception, every all-inclusive history of the cinema accords a very meagre position to the experimental or the avant-garde film. The history of the cinema's development, the periods and the movements, are all contained ~~together~~ within the tradition of the entertainment film, and along side of this, the growth of the documentary, ~~and with an occasional attempt~~ ~~to~~ together with a usually misunderstood reference to the Russian film. But the most you can ever say about the entertainment film is that it has vitality, more or less.

The avant-garde movement in cinema has been called precious, frivolous, dillitantish, pastiche, the plaything of intellectuals - ~~and~~ ~~as~~ ~~the only manifestation of a new medium~~ ~~the cinema, the only true manifestation of a new medium~~ and it has been all of these.

It has also been called the only true manifestation of a new medium -- the cinema, and it has been this, too. But if the experimental movement, in its worst moments has been accused of frivolity ~~or~~, then also can the entertainment film be accused in its worst moments of gross stupidity, and the documentary, of boredom, and the Russian film, of heavy handed propaganda. The best you can say for the experimental film is that it lies closer to the creative capacities of the <sup>individual</sup> artist than any of the other forms of cinema. ~~And that would seem to be enough.~~ It is more potential. And that would seem to be enough.

The scorn for the experimental ~~idea~~ or the avant-garde movement in cinema is not unusual. It has been drummed into us time and time again that the cinema is a machine; but we tend to forget the implications of this fact. As a machine it needed years of development and refinement both technically and theoretically. For at least twenty years ~~after~~ after the cinema's birth it was considered



In spite of being continually told that the cinema  
is a machine, we tend to <sup>(2)</sup> lose sight of the fact ~~that~~  
implied in that meaning. We must ~~stress~~ say it once again.

It does not seem to be generally understood that the moving  
picture camera, being a scientific apparatus, needed tremendous  
refinement, both in technical perfection and a Theory of Use.  
Since, for twenty years after the cinema's birth, it was considered  
by the intelligensia as being nothing but a kind of magical  
novelty not even worthy of decent entertainment, its development  
was left in the hands of relatively uncultured people. No one  
else would touch it. When it built up a primitive aesthetic  
character of its own, when, ~~in 1914~~ in 1914, Griffith's  
BIRTH OF A NATION proved that a potent new medium of expression  
was at hand, the moment was too late to lament the direction.

*Already.*

It was ~~already~~ launched towards the rapids. <sup>Plus</sup> ~~its~~ industrial basis

~~was already formed.~~ - The vicious cycle of producer to renter to  
exhibitor to audience, <sup>was already formed.</sup>

completely impossible  
Therefore it is ~~not possible~~ to examine the artistic  
tradition of the cinema by making a distinction between  
commercial and non-commercial. ~~Each of these was experimental in the~~  
~~sense we mean here, as distinct from the commercial entertainment~~  
~~structure~~  
~~cinema. Although it seems to have been agreed that any~~  
~~handling of the cinema other than for purposes of~~  
~~investment return is~~ One must first be confronted with the

eternal: "What is Art?" and the answer to this, in cinematic  
terms, at least, is found easier by approaching from the rear  
and asking. "What is not Art?"

The inherent character of the film, being visual-motion,  
any conception of its use other than in those terms is false.  
It is as if one produced a ballet without choreography. This  
ephemeral, visual-motion character has its <sup>being</sup> ~~roots~~ <sup>strip of</sup> in the celluloid  
itself, moving in front of an aperture, and then moving on. When



the wheel stops the celluloid is dead. When the wheel begins, we ~~in~~ have motion, which is life: we have also the entire range of plastic forms in movement, and what is more important, we have totally different forms following one upon the other like the ~~rhythmic~~ <sup>rhythmic</sup> sequence of music, to set up definite emotional responses in the mind of the spectator.

Upon this simple basis, then, must the artistic worth of the film depend. At the risk of repeating ~~a~~ <sup>another threadbare</sup> platitude - it is well to say again that this simple cinematic basis has nothing whatsoever to do with the ~~Stage~~ or the ~~Novel~~, although in its own voracious need for a tradition it has drawn heavily upon both of these forms of expression. ~~etc.~~ Thus, because of the precedent of the story film we find it difficult to throw off the necessity for a logical sequence of literary events when we sit down to look at a film. But, <sup>in truth, what</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>is a</sup> logical sequence? <sup>as</sup> ~~in being Absolute~~, we might justifiably say it is as valid to demand of music a "logical" sequence of notes. ~~of music~~

This is not to disparage the story idea in cinema. The inherent character of the film made itself apparent as such, only after years in which millions of feet of film were taken of two general types of subject matter - scenes of actual events, and fictional scenes posed and acted ~~out in front of~~ <sup>before</sup> the camera, Neither of these ~~so~~ classifications required much of an ~~effort~~ <sup>not even the effort of knowing how to read</sup> effort on the part of the spectator. And in the fiction category, it was possible to ~~portray~~ <sup>reveal</sup> the supposedly private affairs of other people ~~in a coy, peeping tom manner~~ <sup>but</sup> without <sup>the presence</sup> any sense of guilt. When it happened that these people were at the ~~same~~ <sup>same</sup> same time wealthy, cosmopolitan, and beautiful, the cinema became the greatest ~~excuse~~ <sup>vehicle</sup> for vicarious living ~~that~~ the world has ever known. It is a question, sometimes, if this ~~is~~ not what is



required much of an effort from the spectator, not even the effort of reading. And in the fiction category it was possible to reveal the supposedly private affairs of other people but without the presence of

~~a sense of guilt at being a peeping tom. When it happened~~  
a sense of guilt at being a peeping tom. When it happened <sup>these</sup> that people were at the same time wealthy, cosmopolitan, and beautiful, the cinema became the greatest vehicle for vicarious living <sup>in fantasy</sup> that the world has ever known. It is a question, sometimes, if this is not what is meant by the phrase, "the tremendous possibilities of the cinema."

This participation in the ~~fictionalized~~ affairs of ~~other~~ <sup>other fictionalized</sup> people, but without shouldering any of the responsibilities - like a deaf-mute relative - resulted in the precedent of the story film, The point being made here is that the story film is not necessarily opposed to pure cinematic expression; it is just that the story film happened to become the ~~dominant~~ dominant form for it, so dominant, in fact, that the latent, inherent character of the medium Film was practically lost beneath the purely technical and unwieldy task of illustrating novels - and illustrating them rather badly at that.

It is this heritage of ostentatiously illustrated novels, and the National Geographic magazine in motion that makes it so difficult to accept the film as a new possibility <sup>for artistic expression.</sup>



Talk by Man Ray at film showing October 15, 1943  
American Contemporary Gallery, Hollywood

The world may be roughly divided into two parts, one part that moves and the other that does not move. This is aside from any question of an animate or inanimate world, for even in these two classes one may make the division of a moving world and a non-moving world. Of course scientists tell us that even the most inert mass of clay is composed of atoms and molecules that are continually whirling and colliding in a frenzy of animation. And I have told scientists that many elements whose motion is visible to the naked eye, elements that obviously move at terrific speed, are quite stationary - do not seem to be getting anywhere

It is necessary that I call attention to this aspect of things, because we are looking at moving pictures in an art gallery primarily dedicated to the presentation of static works of art. You know as well as I do that to look at paintings and sculptures, one must move about. We cannot sit in a comfortable chair and watch the panorama pass by, as in the projection of a film. Therefore, nature always manages to create an even balance. When art stands still, one must move about, when art moves, one may remain motionless.

Many people, intellectuals too, have decided that the dynamic art is the evolution of all art, that the addition of movement to an expressive medium is a contribution that will supersede all previous forms. To me this seems a rather superficial judgment, and I suspect, a selfish one. They like their comfort too much. I could defend the older static arts by saying that since it makes you move about, that since you are put into a dynamic position, it is a superior art. However, I must confess that



I have never been wholeheartedly of that opinion. *either.*

Here is my real attitude, arrived at after years of practice in both mediums, static and dynamic: I have never been a purist, as ~~there~~ existed first in the days of the silent film. I have always demanded a sound accompaniment to round out the effect of silent pictures. I ~~even~~ made attempts at three-dimensional relief, color, and even envisaged the possibilities of smell, and heat and cold. And the attainment of ultimate realism had a definite plan behind it: to create such an atmosphere of reality that it would seriously *compete* ~~interfere~~ with everyday life; that at a given moment the spectator would imagine himself back in the street; in fact he would desire to rush out and breathe the purer air of the outside, live his own life, be the leading actor and solve his own dramatic problems. In that way, he would realize a long cherished dream of becoming a poet, an artist himself, instead of being merely a spectator. Poets *have* ~~like to~~ declared that every one should write poetry.

All art is the writing of poetry, and all full living is the writing of poetry and the painting of pictures. Recently in some small movie house I saw a film in technicolor called Northwest Passage. I go to see films, like any spectator. Now and then I am rewarded. For in this "turnip" as we call commercial films in France, one of the actors announces "Most people try to live - I try to live and paint."

To sum up, as far as the cinema is concerned, the worst films I have seen, that is those that put me to sleep, contain ten or fifteen minutes that are wonderful. In the same way, I may add that the best films I have seen contain only ten or fifteen minutes that are worth while. Which in no way discourages me or makes me a pessimist. I do believe that the movies will become a great art one day, when the production of a film will really be in the hands of one master-mind.

MAN RAY



Typed copy from  
Arts and Architecture  
December 1945.

## EXPLORATION OF NEW FILM TECHNIQUES

By Jay Leyda

The experimental films that John and James Whitney are making offer too many temptations to the critic. He finds himself swimming about aimlessly in a sea of unhelpful comparisons with other arts - or brushing off the worn terminology of abstract painting to attach labels to this new thing being evolved by the Whitneys - or he finds himself fascinated by the romantic spectacle of film-artists working in the very center of the world's film community without that community being aware of their existence.

Fortunately the two film-artists have no difficulties of this sort. They know what they want to do and, seeing their work and talking with them, one feels sure that they will find a way to accomplish their job. The other great "established" art media do not blur for them their particular task - they are too modest and workmanlike. "These are not films yet - they haven't yet earned the right to be called works of art - these are proofs to us that we are on the right path." And the path? "Films can develop a broader appeal than their makers are willing to realize: they can offer popular and fully satisfying esthetic experiences." That is certainly an aim one would enjoy hearing honestly expressed by the Whitneys' film-producing colleagues in Burbank and Culver City.

This is not to imply that John and James Whitney believe this an aim original with them. They recognize that the old



master of animation, Walt Disney, has pointed a way towards a popular use of art and an art use of popularity. And in the field of abstract films there has been a stumbling, twenty-five-year continuity of single, impatient works that might have driven to "fully satisfying esthetic experiences" if their makers had had the determination as well as the talent of the Whitney Brothers. It has been artists of the stature of Viking Eggeling, Man Ray, Fernand Leger, Francis Bruguiere, and Moholy-Nagy who have picked up the abstract film for single excited explorations - and put it down again in favor of more clearly defined media. But the two brothers can justly claim a persistent, steady progress from their first tentative silent fragments to their latest compositions in color and musical sound. Today - twenty-five years after Eggeling's *Symphonie diagonale*, the first achieved abstract film, the Whitneys can look about them and see only two other artists who can offer a comparably solid body of work in this field for our examination: Len Lye and Oskar Fischinger. And as they stand beside these veterans, one must note that John is 29 and James 23!

An analytical critic could begin the record of their progress further back, before the Whitneys found their future medium. This sketch, however, is content to point out that John came to films via photography and music, while James arrived via painting. The pooling of those studies and enthusiasms made an ideal family arrangement that might almost have been expected to culminate in abstract sound-films. Add John's motion picture records of celestial phenomena to James' experiments in water-color with the aim of controlling the time-plan of the



**spectator's** attention - and you have a good start-mark for the films to come.

The first attraction for the brothers was the accomplishment of visual abstraction, or a musical vision, in a film form. Their original adaptation of the standard optical printer made it possible for them to create relatively simple animated sequences in color. Winning control was important to the beginners, and in 1941 they proved both their control over the medium and the flexibility of their new technique in a summation of their first experiments, *Twenty-four Variations on an Original Theme*.

The next attraction was towards music as a support for the visual material they had uncovered. The first trials were made with a record from an album of Mexican music - a record based on Yaqui Indian themes, but in breaking down this musical composition to its basic organization, in order to build up an equivalent organization in visual material, the brothers found that the music assumed full dictatorship over their work, and they realized the need for music as an originally produced co-partner of the originally produced visuals. In 1942 experiments were begun on sound-producing devices, in search of a way to compose music especially for animated films. At the same time further improvements were made in their technique of optical printing to increase the fluidity of composed movement. By 1943 they had constructed the first successful instrument for recording synthetic sound-track in exact synchronization with animated image, and the paper cut-out and pantograph had been introduced as further creative controls for the image. The



medium was about to leave the embryo stage.

Color, too, was ready for more careful inspection - as a more than supplementary element in the development of thematic material, and as an active agent in the temporal structure of each film. Studies were made of the possible use of natural textures and surfaces within the abstract organization. Everything in the world of graphic art tempted them to new trials of the medium - a Picasso collage, a rich color modulation or a purposefully wandering line in a Klee painting.

Their sound recorder had opened another world awaiting exploration. The medium was forcing new thirsts, new needs upon them. They found themselves in possession of a unique device for producing mechanically wave patterns over a six-octave range of frequencies, but their knowledge of music was inadequate to their device, so they began to repair this lack systematically, studying basic counterpoint with Adolf Weiss. The results of these studies appear in their latest films, where their soundtrack has all the variety and drama of their visual image, producing the audio-visual satisfaction that they have defined as their aim. Ingolf Dahl has pointed out that the Whitney brothers have revealed a rich new vein of musical clay, containing a strikingly original tone-color, and that the brothers are already employing their discovery with a sure and natural rhythmic sense.

The Whitneys should be allowed to conclude this sketch. Here is a clean statement by John Whitney on the relation between their aims and their instruments:

"To study particularly these aspects of the film that combine to produce audio-visual experience had



already become one of the basic objectives underlying our concern with the abstract film. At the outset we believed that work with this type of film provides a fundamental discipline for the cinema art. As a study it has a relationship to the medium as a whole that solfeggio or harmony has to music. We have always been less interested, therefore, in inventing new technical processes (an occupation that would place us in direct competition with the extravagantly equipped laboratories of the industry) than in discovering some of the vast unknown esthetic potentialities of the medium.

"Having at our disposal a set of means of sufficient flexibility, that lend themselves favorably to control, our plans are now to achieve a mastery of these means by continued persistent production of films. We believe the problems before us are essentially structural - more a problem of understanding through experience gained by creative work, how elements combine to become inherent thematic material, than merely discovering further sensory effects which new techniques may produce. A wealth of rich sensory effects varying from the rotating distortion mirror to the use of flowing paint, stand available to us when they may be employed as elements within a unified structural whole. We propose to exploit this material as the growth of structure within our control demands."





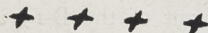
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## THE CURRENT CINEMA

*Hearts and Finance*

THE heroine of "Mrs. Parkington" is working in a boarding house in a Western mining town when in walks Major Augustus Parkington, popular, up-and-coming young robber baron. His silver mine, which he jovially concedes to be unsafe, blows up with the girl's mother in it, and several days elapse before shock ripens into love and gratitude and she marries him. The newlyweds then hop the iron horse for New York, where they set to work founding a dynasty in a Louvre-type cottage handy to Wall Street. As interpreted by Hollywood from the *Cosmopolitan*-serial English of Louis Bromfield, the Major is ruthless but cute. When he draws up a list of fifty financiers with bad manners whom he proposes to drive to suicide, his wife cannot bring herself to blame him, though she does persuade him to cut down somewhat on a program which is clearly too rich for even the Major's blood. Meanwhile, the dynasty grows, and this—as the film's authors, and Mr. Bromfield before them, have taken care to point out—is where the Parkingtons make their mistake. No good comes of dynasties. The children and grandchildren of a rugged individualist, inheriting the scratch instead of getting out there and hustling it for themselves the hard way, with an excitable mine or two, become selfish, corrupt, and evil. The heirs of the Parkingtons are all of that. You would back any one of them against a hydrophobic ferret, best two bites out of three. The picture enjoys a rich and plushy mounting and is full of nice period touches. Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon are skillfully disarming in the leading rôles, especially Mr. Pidgeon.

I SAW "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay" at the height of the 1944 Sinatra riots at the Paramount. These were good riots as riots go, cleaner than the Haymarket affair or the storming of the Bastille and more dignified than the Sinatra riots of '43. Still, they tended to leave a critic a little hazy about the film which spaced Sinatra's concerts. Wearing saddle shoes and carrying a lunch pail, by way of camouflage, you felt pretty safe once you had ditched your cigar and got inside the enemy lines, but there were mo-

ments when the cries from the first twenty rows, reminiscent of a party of Iroquois putting an Algonquin village to the torch, sent your heart skipping into your throat. The picture, as I remember, is a pleasant one, and it was adapted from the pleasant book by Cornelia Otis Skinner and Emily Kimbrough. Two



young and pretty girls (the Misses Skinner and Kimbrough), played by Gail Russell and Diana Lynn, go to London and Paris on their summer vacation in 1923.

The mood is light and nostalgic, the girls are nitwitted enough to get into many jams, of a wholesome nature, and I'd say that all in all "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay" will give you your money's worth if you stalk it to some quiet rendezvous far from the madding stage show. Incidentally, it's a lie that Sinatra fans sleep through the picture. During the early part of the day, at least, they just sit back and take each other's pulse.

SOME folks who have seen "Laura" contend that it is more than an ordinary detective or mystery film. They say it has overtones of social satire, the object of same being New York café life. I mention this theory for the record, but my own apologetic belief is that "Laura's" background and characters are no more true or significant than those of most detective pictures and rather less interesting than those of several I recall. It is unusual and briefly stimulating to hear Clifton Webb's smooth delivery of acid lines of the kind associated with the late Alexander Woollcott, but these particular lines would have been discarded by Woollcott as soon as he thought of them. As for the rest of the dialogue, the detective is asked at one point, "Whom do you suspect?" "I suspect nobody and everybody," he replies. At these words I shot a swift, searching look at the fellow's face to see if he was kidding. He wasn't, and that's about the end of it.

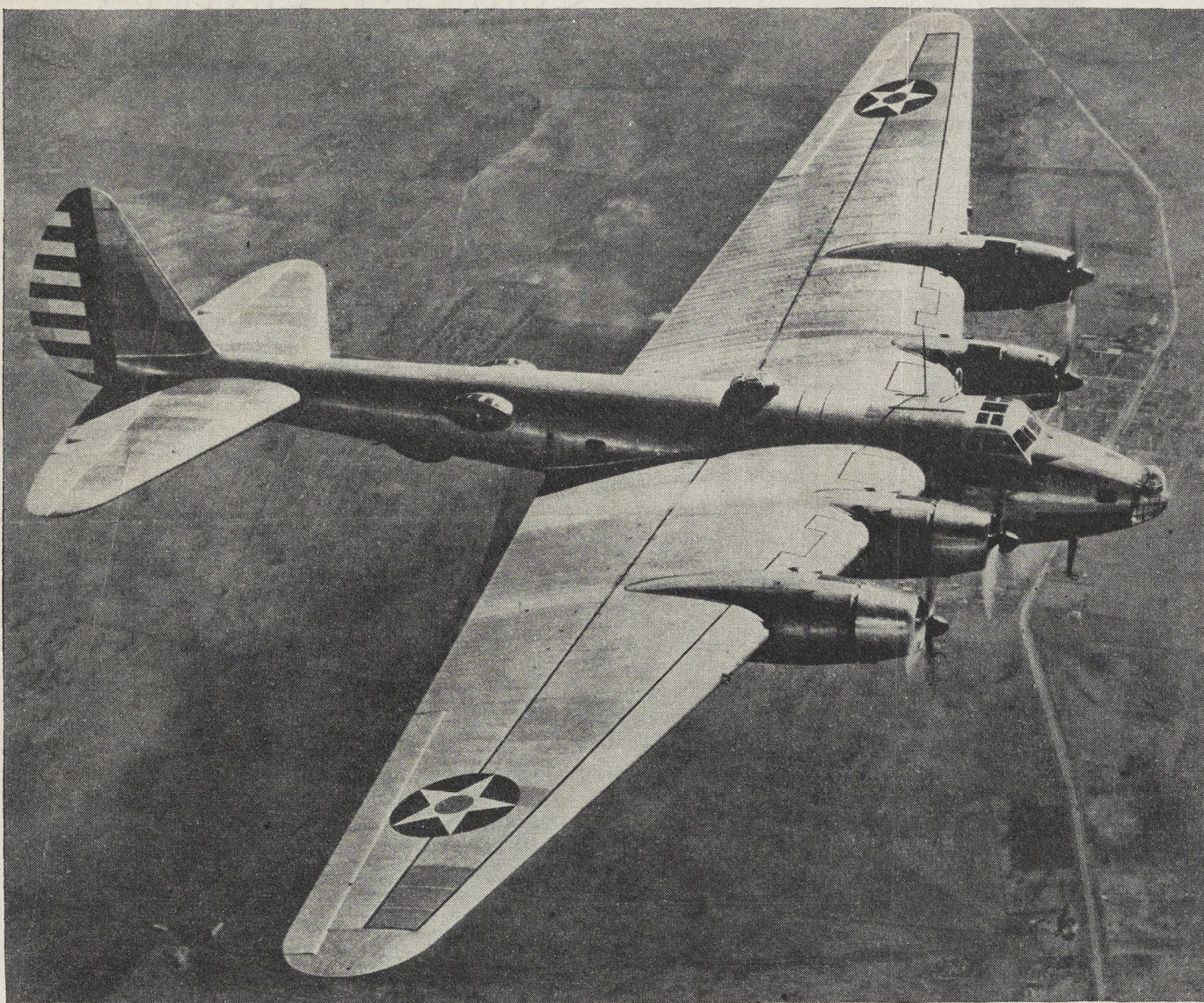
—JOHN I.

### A THOUGHT FOR

[Fulton Lewis  
Seattle Post]

All of the 100 films before Mr. Roosevelt are at least 12 when appointed.





Boeing B-15 . . . first of the Superbombers

## "Grandpappy"

Today's history-making bomber is the Boeing B-29 Superfortress. But there is another huge plane still in service that years ago laid the groundwork for the B-29. It is the one airplane never spoken of in the feminine gender: "Grandpappy," they call the Boeing B-15 . . . first of the superbombers.

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Though never in combat, "Grandpappy" has led an adventurous life. In 1939 the huge plane carried serum to earthquake victims in Chile, covering 3000 miles non-stop on the return trip. Today, thundering over the Caribbean, he's flying 15-ton cargoes to Army bases. He can go out for 24 hours at a stretch without landing to refuel.

The walls of his crew's living quarters are covered with thousands of autographs scrawled by generals, admirals, senators and buck privates.

But "Grandpappy's" greatest satisfaction is in knowing he helped make possible the building of the great Boeing B-29 Superfortress.

For more than any other aircraft manufacturer, Boeing has pioneered in the problems of long-range bombardment through development of the B-15 and B-17. In addition to this, the Stratoliners and Transocean Clippers have given Boeing unequaled experience in 4-engine aircraft, making it the company which could design, produce in quantity and get into action during wartime the world's greatest bombing weapon — the Boeing B-29 Superfortress.

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Walter Ruttmann

Palat - Secrets of the Soul  
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spontaneity and simplicity  
of the primitives.

— Rene Clair's "Entr'acte"  
Ballet Mecanique, records  
better than verbal descriptions  
the channels which the  
soul advances - garde  
was so busily exploring  
— made to be accompanied  
by special music

---

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from didactic sermonizing.

The film index  
The film as art  
Museum of modern art  
Film Library and  
H. W. Wilson

Symphonie Diagonale,  
1917-20 - Eggling



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painters, writers, and musicians began to  
debbles with it — at a time when the cinema  
had been established on a firm and  
powerful industrial basis. ~~Criticism~~ In this  
light, criticism of the ~~system~~ industrial  
system, it becomes futile.



make strong notation of the crudity of  
early film.

\* a most important ~~realization~~ is the  
a point ~~that~~ that seems to escape

it is difficult to realize  
~~examining~~ the films ~~from a critical~~  
an aesthetic viewpoint

it is difficult ~~for~~ to realize  
from our own

from our own present viewpoint it is  
difficult to realize the ~~low primitive~~ films  
wretched social status ~~from its inception~~  
for almost two decades. The <sup>critical states</sup> culture <sup>with</sup> ~~public~~  
and the intelligentsia ~~as well as the~~  
~~legitimate stage~~ looked upon it with a  
very emphatic disdain - if they looked  
upon it at all. The men who developed  
the film were not ~~cultural~~ <sup>nevertheless</sup> artistically  
cultured in any way. They developed the  
cinema. ~~nevertheless~~ <sup>no one else would touch it.</sup> ~~it was not until~~  
1914 with Griffith's "Birth of a Nation"  
~~that~~ <sup>did</sup> the more artistically-thinking  
public began to realize the potent capabilities  
of the medium. And it was not until  
almost eight years later that the best



# Leonography

Page 7 - Language of  
Vision -

"The Optical Revolution  
— how this revolution  
was differentiated in  
many ways of expression  
from Cubism to surrealism  
— modern artists had  
to reject a slavish  
obedience to the portrayal  
of objects.

The liberation of the  
plastic elements.

fertile appearance.



## Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Over Time

Total Time

[illegible]



W. A. Overstreet - "About Ourselves"

Chapter 12 - Music. The Power of music on the personality. Shakespeare. 'The man who has no music in his soul is fit for Treason etc.' Plato on music. Only certain kinds to be omitted to his ideal Republic. Darwin: 'Loss of music (& poetry) tastes may have derogatory effects by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.'

Music. Definition. Jules Combarieu: The art of thinking in sounds (without verbal concepts). It is analogous to the shading of a spoken sentence. When a single sentence can be, through a variety of <sup>different</sup> expressions, ~~words~~ and voices, made to have many different meanings. Around the literal, precise meaning of a phrase, an atmosphere of significances and suggestions are formed.

Is conceptually formless, outwearing all preciseness. — ~~It~~ liberates us from the ~~too~~ specific.

Jazz — also liberates us from the specific. It expresses sheer feeling common to us all. But there is a difference in feeling.

Feelings ~~that~~ are good and not so good. Jazz is the passion of movement, excitement, abandon, sex.

Music comes speaking at times not of our highest ~~feelings~~ wisdom, but some of our deepest follies. And it speaks them in a language far more powerful than reason.

Universal feelings — sorrow, gladness, yearning, hope, love. Music universalizes.

Emotion is never pure emotion, it must always tie up with a specific personal image.



Musical releases on own fountain of images.  
Quotation by Dr. Daniel Gregory Mason:

Musical is no out of ourselves. It is  
homogenic in effect. It begets its like. The  
individual, then, is pulled out of his locked-  
up tightness. He is made to laugh or weep or  
sigh with something else that does likewise.  
He is made to join in. Thus, the movement  
induced is essentially expansive, outward.  
#

---

~~Vindicate~~  
Vindicate - to defend against odds, to  
maintain, uphold.

Vindictive Revenge - Japan classified  
as an inferior nation, race (Versailles  
negotiations), not accepted on equality.  
United States Senate passed war  
conclusionary act.



# Synthetic Sound and Abstract Image

LEON BECKER

THE IDEA of abstract images on film is not new. During the 'twenties, European attempts in "visual music" met with widespread notoriety but little success. Most of these attempts to create an abstract film art took the form of a visual accompaniment of colored geometric figures to a sound track of orchestra or solo instrument. At times, a mechanical translation of sound into light and color was utilized. It was apparently not recognized that image abstraction could not be successfully matched with the sound of combinations of known instruments, and that real abstractions would necessarily mean synthetic sound as well as picture. Where a direct mechanical translation of sound into image was avoided, the alternative of frame-by-frame animation was both primitive and unwieldy. Further, no sustained effort was made to study the psychological and physiological effects of dynamic colored images upon an audience.

Several years ago, Messrs. James and John Whitney, in their search for a medium that would permit a more dynamic use of color than was possible with the material of graphic art, decided that film was the answer. After much research and experimentation in an improvised studio in Los Angeles, they found a means of creating controllable graphic images by a method other than hand animation. An adaptation of the standard optical printer, paper cutouts, pantographs, and color filters supplied the elements. Two or more shapes cut from opaque papers

are manipulated one over the other with a diffused area of light underneath. Controlled manipulation is achieved by a pair of pantographs the primary points of which hold the cutouts while the secondary points are traced over a previously laid-out movement pattern. This carefully planned sequence is photographed frame by frame in black and white and, after development, is then placed in the projection side of a specially constructed optical printer. The camera side of the optical printer is loaded with "Kodachrome." Through the use of color filters and the magnifying, reducing, inversion, and multiple-exposure possibilities of the optical printer it becomes possible to construct lengthy, complex, and multicolored compositions from a relatively simple source of carefully animated thematic material.

The sound track is also entirely synthetic and is made mechanically by linking together twelve pendulums of various lengths by means of a fine steel wire attached to an optical wedge. This optical wedge is caused to oscillate over a light slit by the motion of the pendulums, producing a variable-area type of sound track. The pendulums can be operated together in any combination, or separately. The frequency of each can be adjusted or tuned to conform to any existing scale or an assumed new scale by adjustment of a sliding weight. Through the choice of pendulum lengths and driven speeds the full range of audio frequencies can be recorded. No actual sound is involved in



recording the wave patterns generated by the pendulums, since these move at subsonic frequencies. Only when the resultant film is projected at regular sound-projection speed is sound produced.

Thus both image and sound are at the same time infinitely variable and positively controllable, and the technique evolved permits a unified

approach to the potentialities of the medium. To explore the possibilities of dynamic color relationships and sound production toward the development of an abstract film art form is the basic aim of the Whitney brothers, though their studies, experiments, and findings may have much to contribute to the progress of the dramatic color film as well.



## CINEMA

continued from page 13

to a three pound box of the best chocolates and knock them off at one sitting, will happen to your eyes and mind when you see Walt Disney's latest picture, "Three Caballeros." This picture is too much of a good thing, and quite purposeless. There are some wonderful things in it, lucious, galaxious colors, and rich music. But seventy minutes of the same without going anywhere in particular is too much. The kids will enjoy twenty minutes of it.—ROBERT JOSEPH.

## BOOKS

continued from page 12

no virtue of his own, and in the ordeal he stumbles upon a kind of thinking that involves the spirit as well as the word.

There is a slight plot, so cunningly put together that one suspects Aldous Huxley of concealing about his person the knack of writing a humdinger of a detective story. There are worldly characters, spiritual characters—singularly vivid, even when they serve primarily as mouthpieces for the author. These things one expects from Huxley. What one does not expect is a preoccupation with spiritual concepts, with mysticism, with religious experience, with revelation. He writes with exhaustive knowledge of what great thinkers and great saints (sometimes identical) have said on the subject. Being Huxley, he writes with patrician style, classical balance. His purpose is not to make converts, or even to pronounce definite conclusions. He merely re-opens a topic from which a lesser author might well shrink: from which, to judge by the opus of Philip Wylie, a lesser author OUGHT to shrink. *Time Must Have a Stop* is no more, perhaps, than a jab at the complacency of both the devout and the heretic. But it is a jab with a finely pointed instrument.—PATTERSON GREENE.

## AUDIO-VISUAL-MUSIC

continued from page 28

A second factor of limitation is the persistence of vision and certain inherent natural differences in response to rhythm of the eye and ear. Particularly with regard to rapid rhythmic alterations, effects actually painful to the eyes are encountered.

Finally a third difference between image time and sound time is the significance of the relation of graphic space to time. Space-time considerations are brought into striking pre-eminence. No movement within the screen area can be thought of oblivious of time. No shape, no space eludes movement considerations void of the time factor. Space and time are here inseparable in a very real, practical sense. A tiny animated shape creating a rhythmic movement in a given screen space may produce one effect. The same animation magnified many times so as to fill the entire screen area produces a radically different temporal experience, though the time of each may be exactly the same. The change is qualitative to such a degree that variation upon a thematic idea by magnification or reduction in size is generally not clear or recognizable as a variation.

Sufficient experiment has indicated rather conclusively the minor extent to which full screen passages of mere color sequences void of graphic form can be used to carry a rhythmic idea. Unless supported by a strong musical reinforcement, the effect is surprisingly ambiguous. Such sequences introduced as thematic ideas to be later subjected to variation and development are even more generally foredoomed to meaninglessness. These observations reflect the apparent failure of all color-music experiments which treated color as an independent visual entity. The established doctrine that color and graphic form (line mass and texture) exist inseparably in experience is here only reaffirmed with perhaps new dynamic significance. Analysis would reveal that whereas variety in color may be achieved by virtue of some temperal pattern it is overburdened with an obviously monotonous graphic form structure: the static screen.

What then, can be the role of color in audio-visual-music? It is still the most vital element of the total sensory experience. Color structure united with a graphic-time structure is comparable to the relationship between orchestration and theme structure of a music composition, the two being a unified whole. Just as orchestration provides the composer with a large textural vocabulary with which he may freely build as richly or as thinly as is his structural need, so with the use of color there must be this same liberty. Color will probably never for long be restricted to a theoretical key of relationships. Though theoretical systems or keys will often account for the special unity of one composition or the works of one composer.

Audio-visual relationships offer promise of profoundly unique experience; witness Alexander Nevsky, Memphis Belle and White Flood. This type of relationship is the primary attribute of audio-visual-music. One may expect the broadcast variety of relationships possible, covering a gamut from the freest interplay of sound and image through counterplay to strict temporal correlation.

The fallacy of mechanically translating previously composed music into some visual equivalent, having been established repeatedly enough in critical writings on the subject, a freer less encumbered approach is possible today. Even so-called interpretation of existing music graphically is at best an exceedingly difficult technical achievement and practically barren of reward

to the artist seeking creative expression. The truly creative possibilities remain where the image structure dictates or inspires sound structure and visa versa or both are reached simultaneously. This obviously can be realized best when both parts have common creative origins.

This is becoming possible today even for the amateur as sound-track writing or synthesizing devices, manageable by one person appear on the horizon along with simplified animation techniques. The generally accepted assumption that the cinema must by nature be an industrial, cooperative art, is least likely to be so with audio-visual-music. Amateur cine equipment compares well in quality today with that of the industry. There already exist small enterprises prepared to supply special processing, sound recording and duplicating services to small scale limited budget film makers. The remaining technological problem of the independent artist is to somehow assure final perfection of these new means.

The role that television can play in the development of audio-visual-music probably cannot be underestimated. Undoubtedly the most striking quality of the television program is its intense realism; the realism of spot news and spontaneous programs of all sorts. But this very spontaneity has as by-product a degree of disorganization which will have to be dealt with in much the same manner that radio finds a compensation of contrast in the use of music. The so-called music bridge or incidental music of radio serves this specific purpose. The relatively unorganized spontaneous portions of the radio program are carefully sandwiched between periods of music. This radio has found a real organic need for specially composed music. Even though it had the enormous accumulation of western civilization's music to draw from, radio found it necessary recently to begin employing composers to supply these specific needs. It is fairly safe to assume that television will discover an equally organic need for an audio-visual equivalent to radio's music-bridge, and it is also safe to judge that the discovery will institute a search beyond current solutions which are usually motivated by economic expediency. The artist with a sense of the deeper meaning of organic structure alone can make the distinction between the "current solution" and an organic solution. Technological trinkets in the form of Kaleidoscopes and other mechanical devices which fill the television screen with arbitrary pattern and are related to music mechanically if at all are certainly not the organic solution. Television insofar as it functions fully, an integral part of the new time and society, will not only employ audio-visual-music organically within its regular programs but will perform individual works of the contemporary composers.

## COMMENTS ON PLANETARY RECONSTRUCTION

continued from page 22

C. I. A. M.—Les Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne, a worldwide professional organization with headquarters in Switzerland and a splendid national membership in 18 countries, has functioned for two decades. Its last European president, Van Eesteren, was city planning director of Amsterdam. Vice president, Walter Gropius, J. L. Sert, and general secretary, Dr. Sigfried Giedion live now in U. S. A number of its collaborative publications, the last of them, *Can Our Cities Survive*, by J. L. Sert, have decisively influenced contemporary thought in planning matters. Naturally, this organization has been disrupted by the war. The present historical moment, filled with anticipation of world reconstruction, is more than ever in need of the cooperation of city planners and architects in order that great opportunities are not missed.

The American chapter of C.I.A.M. for Relief and Reconstruction, officially incorporated in the State of New York, is the immediate action group, resuming interrupted contacts with the national planners and architect chapters in all allied and liberated countries and aiding the formation of new groups in Latin America, China, Australia, etc.; establishing a mutual information service between these groups and Federal and United Nations agencies, economic missions of many countries delegated to Washington, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, labor and professional organizations, etc. It aims to serve as a clearing house between technical research institutions of many kinds and foreign architects and planners and in helping to translate their needs to American industry. As soon as possible a World Reconstruction Congress in New York is contemplated.

## EDITORS' NOTE:

Members of C.I.A.M., well representing a number of Allied Countries and original American members, have elected the following officers:

President: Richard J. Neutra, Architect and Consultant.

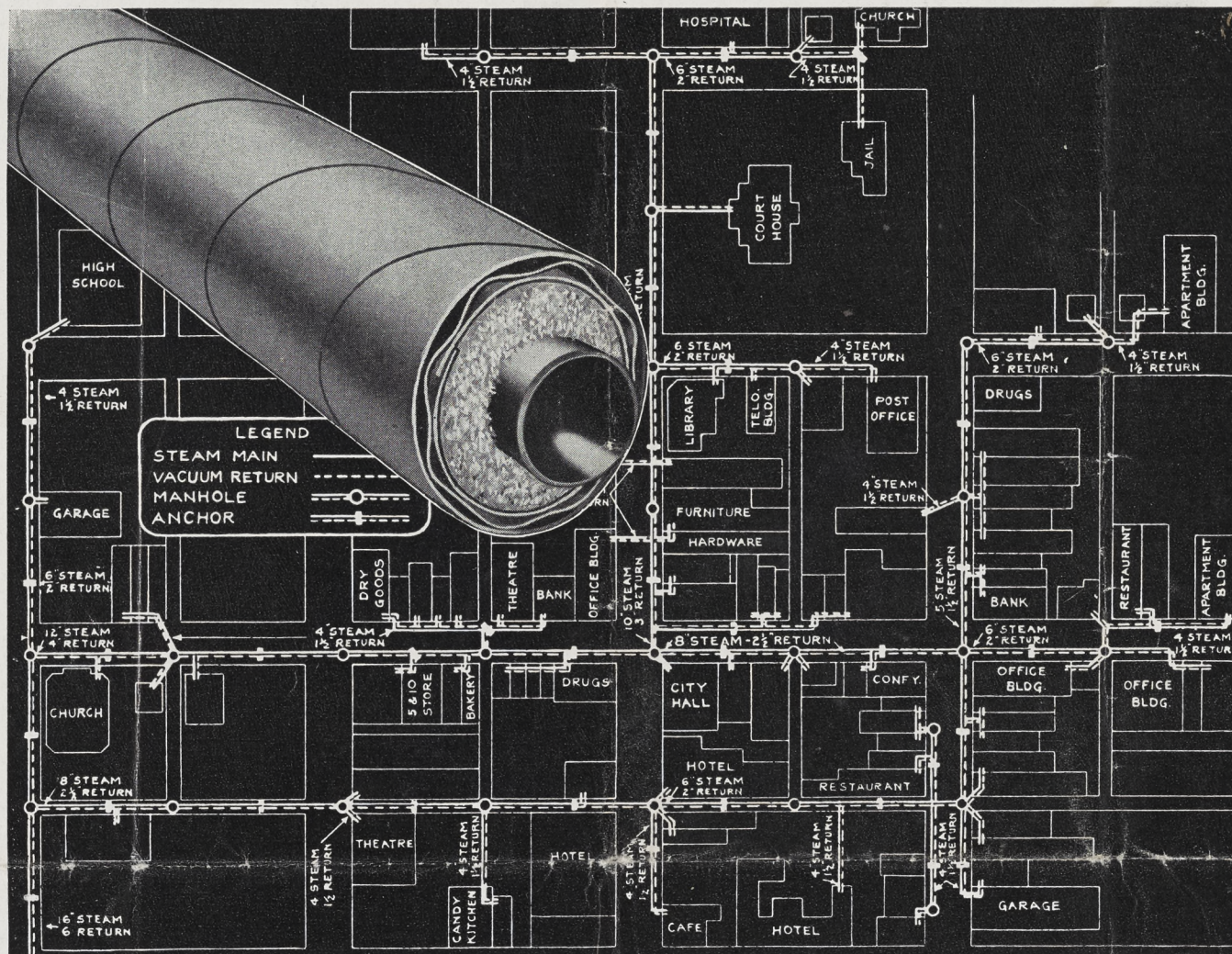
Vice-Presidents: K. Lonberg Holm, Research Director of Dodge Corporation; Jose Luis Sert, Author of *Can Our Cities Survive*; Paul Nelson, Head of the Architecture Section French Economic and Postwar Planning Mission.

Secretary: Stamo Papadakis, Architect, Athens, Greece.

Treasurer: Harwell H. Harris, Architectural and Industrial Designer.

Board of Directors: Wallace K. Harrison of Harrison & Fouilhoux, Architects of Rockefeller Center; Joseph Hudnut, Dean of Architectural Department, Harvard University; Pierre Chareau, Noted Architect and Designer, Paris, France; Serge Chermayeff, formerly of London, England and now Head of Art Department, Brooklyn College; Sigfried Giedion, Zurich, Switzerland, Executive Secretary C.I.A.M., noted Art Historian, lecturer at Harvard and Yale Universities; Walter Gropius, Chairman of Architecture, Harvard University; A. Lawrence Kocher, Former Editor, *Architectural Record*; L. Moholy-Nagy, Director of the Institute of Design; Mies Van de Rohe, Head of Architectural Department, Institute of Technology; Oscar Stonorov, Town Planner, Architect, and Author, Philadelphia; Ernest Weissman, Architect, Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Head of Division for Shelter, U.N.R.R.A.; Paul Lester Wiener, Designer of Brazil House, New York World's Fair and Consultant to Latin American Government; William Wilson Wurster, Dean of Architectural Department, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.





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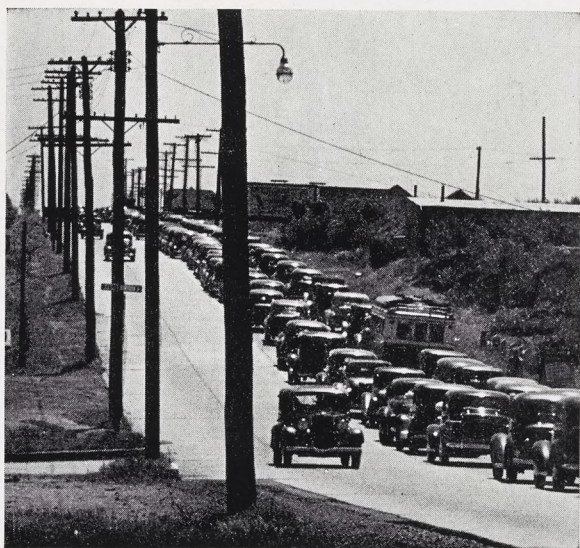
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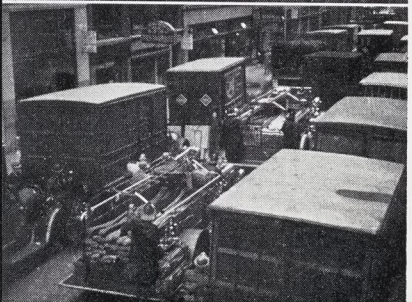
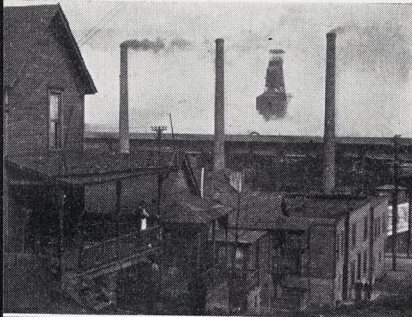
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\$ 65.00



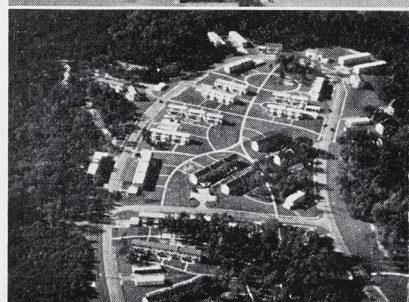
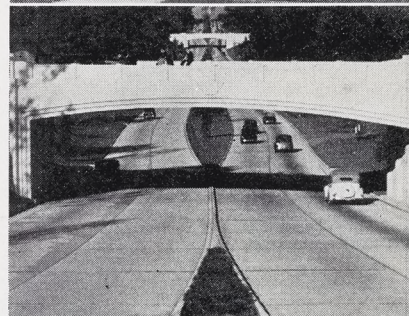
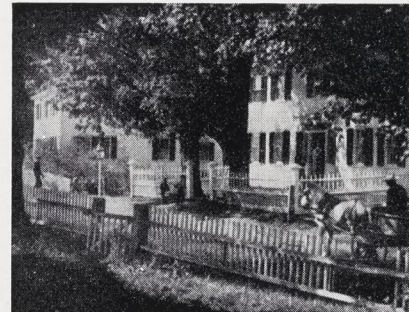
*“Year by year our cities grow more complex and less fit for living. The age of rebuilding is here. We must remould our old cities and build new communities better suited to our needs.”*



As indicated by the typical scenes here reproduced, “The City” contrasts vividly the best and the worst of urban development in the United States. It tells the story of early American life in a charming New England village; of the coming of factory and mining towns with jerry-built houses clinging to barren, gullied hills, in the midst of the din, smoke and grime of mills and locomotives. Then the camera dramatizes the hurrying crowds and confusion of the modern metropolis. Wall Street is shown jammed with people. Suddenly, as the bells of Trinity Church toll the Sunday hour, the same street is shown deserted, and the scene jumps to an endless stream of cars plunging along ill-planned highways to escape the city. The maddening Sunday traffic jams, the hazards of unprotected two-way traffic, the defacement of the landscape by ugly billboards and signs, the strain of stop-and-go traffic, and the danger of roads crossing at the same level, are all shown.

In the final sequence we see well-planned parkways leading to the “green city” that foresight and intelligent planning made possible. This is not a visionary city of some distant future, but parts of actual planned communities as they now exist, each displaying some element of the future city that has already been realized. Traffic flows smoothly on landscaped, protected highways; people work in clean, airy, sunlit factories; children and adults alike play in the sun and air; homes are bright and clean, and the houses blend into the green landscape. The camera picks out details of housing, of planning, of underpasses, of parks, of protected roadways, of safe recreational fields, as it shows the healthful, orderly life that is possible in a community designed with forethought, and points out the objectives to be sought not only in the building of new communities but in the remoulding of our present cities. As the cleanliness and efficiency of the green city is contrasted with the dirt and disorder of the industrial city and the metropolis, the film ends with scenes of children playing beneath sunny skies.

This documentary combines good photography with dramatic editing, sound commentary, and musical score woven into an emotional survey of an important social problem. Out of the film two basic generalizations arise: (1) the transfer from an agricultural to an industrial existence brought a type of urbanization which failed to provide for basic human needs; (2) it is possible even in an industrial civilization by use of science and engineering to design communities which provide an environment favorable to good living. It should prove effective in stimulating discussion and research dealing with community planning in an industrial society.





## THE CITY

3 reels sound: 30 minutes

Photographed and directed by Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke; production supervised by Oscar Serlin; scenario and associate in production, Henry Rodakiewicz; music by Aaron Copland; film editor, Theodore Lawrence; original outline by Pare Lorentz; commentary written by Lewis Mumford; musical conductor, Max Goberman; narrator, Morris Carnovsky; produced 1939 by Civic Films, Inc., through the aid of the Carnegie Corporation.

While schools, universities and city planning organizations are the prime users of THE CITY, a cross-section of the many hundreds of other users reveals such varied groups as . . .

American Association of Scientific Workers  
American Sociological Society  
American Youth Congress  
Baltimore Museum of Art  
Bedford Park Presbyterian Church  
Beth Eden House, Philadelphia  
Boys' Club of Kansas City  
Branford Congregational Church  
Corinth Methodist Church  
Furriers Union  
George Williams College Camp  
Long Island Lodge of Danish Brotherhood  
Montclair Public Library  
Mount Vernon Liberal and Labor Club  
National Federation of Settlements  
National Municipal League  
New Hampshire Federation of Taxpayers  
Philadelphia Friends  
San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition  
Springfield Museum of Fine Arts  
St. Louis League of Women Shoppers  
Topeka Y. W. C. A.  
Torresdale Civic Association  
United Automobile Workers of America  
Washington Cooperative Bookshop

Also, among the purchasers of prints for library and local use are . . .

American Film Center  
American Society of Planning Officials  
Board of Education of Rochester  
Dartmouth College  
Indiana University  
International Film Bureau  
Midland Cooperative Wholesale  
Milwaukee Public Library  
National Film Society of Canada  
Nashville Housing Authority  
Pasadena City Schools  
Saint Francis Xavier University  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
United Automobile Workers  
University of Minnesota



PROGRAM NOTES

OCT 4 CONTINENTAL AVANT-GARDE

EMAK BAKIA (1926, France) Produced, directed, and  
Obtained from Man Ray  
photographed by Man Ray. "A series of fragments, a cinepoem  
with a certain optical sequence make up a whole that still remains  
a fragment. Just as one can much better appreciate the abstract  
beauty in a fragment of a classic work than in its entirety so this  
film tries to indicate the essentials in contemporary cinematography.  
It is not an "abstract" film nor a story-teller; its reason for being  
are its inventions of light-forms and movements, while the more  
objective parts interrupt the monotony of abstract inventions or  
serve as punctuation. Anyone who can sit through an hour's pro-  
jection of a film in which sixty per cent of the action passes in and  
out of doorways and in inaudible conversations, is asked to give  
twenty minutes of attention to a more or less logical sequence of ideas  
without any pretention of revolutionizing the film industry. To  
those who would still question 'the reason for this extravagance' one  
can simply reply by translating the title Emak Bakia, an old Basque  
expression which means 'don't bother me'."

Man Ray

(From CLOSE UP, August, 1927)

Mr. Ray Mr. Ray requests that a musical accompaniment consisting  
of old jazz records, popular French songs and waltzes be played with  
his films, and that no attempt at synchronization ~~need~~ be made,  
~~the music merely creating an atmosphere only.~~



CONTINENTAL AVANT-GARDE (cont.)

L'ETOILE DE MER (Star of the Sea) (1928, France) Produced,  
directed and photographed by Man Ray, based upon a poem of the same  
name by Robert Desnos. With Andre de la Riviere. An experimental  
film ~~based~~ composed in terms of visual rhythms and visual rhymes.  
Here the peculiar <sup>beauty</sup> ~~atmosphere~~ of a modern poem is translated  
into visual imagery by the use of ~~technical devices~~ experimental  
photographic methods, a field in which Man Ray is the unquestioned  
master. The fluid, atmospheric quality ~~is~~ is a result of  
shooting through a pane of <sup>obscuring</sup> ~~ground~~ glass. But when an image  
presents a compositional interest in itself it is photographed  
normally. The <sup>sequence</sup> ~~flow~~ of images varies <sup>with</sup> ~~from~~ these deformed optical  
<sup>transformations</sup> ~~impressions~~, ~~to~~ <sup>sharp</sup> ~~immobilised~~ compositions, and ~~strong~~ focusing,  
creating perfectly the atmosphere of the poem that was ~~its~~ ~~one~~ its  
inspiration.

<sup>attach</sup>  
UBERFALL (~~Accident~~) (1929, Germany) Directed by Erno Metzner,  
Written by Erno Metzner and Grace Chiang. Photographed by Hans  
Casparius. With Timor Halmay, Imre Raday, Sybille Schmitz, Hans  
Casparius and Erno Metzner. When this socio-psychological study  
of an innocent man pursued by fate to a tragic end was first  
released in Germany, it was banned by the German censors on the  
grounds of brutality and inducement to crime, even though, ~~based~~  
~~on~~ as a study of the dream conscience, it had the whole-hearted app-  
roval of Dr. Hans Sachs, the eminent Viennese psychoanalyst. The  
director replied to the German censor's ban:

"UBERFALL is a short film, corresponding to the short story  
form in literature. It represents a new method, and therefore must  
be measured with new standards.....



CONTINENTAL AVANT-GARDE

UBERFALL(Cont.)

"It represents an event, without commentary, merely as a fact, and dry as a report. The contents consist of the hero's increasing state of fear.....All the scenes...aim merely at inducing the feeling of fear, the consequences of which is the psychologically irreproachable dream of fear that has been thought out as the film's culmination. " This mounting of fear tempo within the hero's mind while under anesthesia/constitutes an ~~amazing~~ magnificent use of the cinema's capacity to picture/the world of the sub-conscious. The flow of images suggest that/reality is this dream world, and that the real world (the nurses, doctors, etc.) are the remote demension. The ~~cadence~~ cadence of these images ~~are~~ <sup>are designed</sup> composed to ~~be~~ give the exact impression of the mind turning over and over again on one point <sup>which ultimately mounts in momentum to become a horror.</sup> that ~~becomes~~ becomes a horror. For this reason, no musical accompaniment will be played with ~~this~~ film.

COQUILLE ET CLERGYMAN (The Seashell and the Clergyman) (1928, France) Directed by Germaine Dulac. Scenario by Antonin Artaud. Photographed by Paul Guichard.



9 OCT 25.. THE ANIMATED FILM AS AN ART FORM

ANIMATED PAINTINGS--Examples of pre-film animation from the magic-lantern era. 1879.

DRAME CHEZ LES FANTOCHES(French 1907) By Emil Cohl. The second of the French pioneer's film cartoons.

GERTIE THE DINOSAUR(American <sup>1909</sup>1909) Created and drawn by Winsor McCay.

Acquired through the courtesy of Robert W. McCay Jr. Animated cartoons had previously made their appearance on the screen in 1906, with J.

Stuart Blackton's HUMOROUS PHASES OF FUNNY FACES, and in 1907, with Emil Cohl's FANTASMAGORIE. It is Winsor McCay, however, who must be regarded as the true father of Felix The Cat and all the cinema's other delightfully antropomorphic creatures. He made GERTIE THE DINOSAUR independently in ~~1909~~ 1909 and showed it in vaudeville theatres, himself playing the roll of interlocutor.

FELIX THE CAT(American 1924) Created and drawn by Pat Sullivan. This was the cinema cartoons first hero.

STEAMBOAT WILLIE(American 1928) Disney had made other film cartoons, but it was not until the sound film that he created Mickey Mouse. This was the first release of that most famous of all cartoon heroes.

CARMEN(German 1933) Created by Lotte Reiniger.

MAD DOG(American 1932) Walt Disney.

SKELETON DANCE(American 1929) Produced ~~designed~~ designed and directed by Walt Disney. Acquired through the courtesy of Mr. Disney. Walt Disney had created any number of animated cartoons before his name became a household word. The first was executed for a cinema in Kansas City. Between that time and 1927 he produced seven Fairy Tale<sup>s</sup> Cartoons, an ALICE series and the better known OSWALD THE RABBITT series. He evolved what the Disney studio refers to as the "mouse form" in the spring of 1928, after many



experiments during the course of which the mouse was tried out with various kinds of clothes, ears and expressions. The first Mickey Mouse film PLANE CRAZY, showed Mickey emulating the exploits of Lindbergh. It was silent, and no bookings could be secured for it. Fame and fortune waited on the second Mickey Mouse, STEAMBOAT WILLIE, made with sound. It scored an immediate success at its first showing in September, 1928. THE SKELETON DANCE, first of the Silly Syphonies, was made the following year.

In the Mickeys and the Symphonies alike, the brilliant use of sound as an integral part of the cartoon, rather than as an accompaniment, deserves special attention. The freshness and playfulness of these films, their technical perfection and pictorial quality are the delight of simpletons and seers the world over.

~~REMOVED~~ @

RHYTHMUS 21 (Germany 1921) Designed and photographed by Hans Richter. The first "pure film". Here Richter took the form the screen gave him --the square and the rectangle - and moved them rhythmically with and against each other. The first film to use negative as positive. Theo van Doesburg sponsored the premiere in Paris, introducing Richter as a Dane because of World War I feeling against the Germans. (Museum of Modern Art; Cinematheque Francaise, Paris) (From An Index to the Creative Work of Hans Richter compiled by Herman Weinberg.)



Oct. 18 1946. THE ABSTRACT AND THE REALISTIC IMAGE.

by Oskar Fischinger

These studies/in the Absolute Film were made in ~~the late twenties~~  
~~and the early part of the thirties~~ Germany in the Germany during the late  
twenties and the early part of the thirties. They carry on and develop  
the direction begun as far back as 1912 by Leopold Survage, and later,  
by Viking Eggeling ~~and~~ Hans Richter, and other painters who chose to see  
the film proceed in purely non-objective ~~directions~~ rather than in  
realistic directions. But whereas the earlier men experimented with  
moving form alone, Fischinger employed the rhythms and tonalities  
of musical compositions from which to launch his optical rhythms,  
creating a ~~formal~~ visible interpretation of the music. It is  
interesting to note that the early black and white films are <sup>hardly</sup> less  
successful than the color films, an ample indication of the correctness  
of the first rule in cinema - whether abstract or realistic - that  
~~the films are and only~~ the film's major quality is motion.

By Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid  
MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON (American 1943) / A film concerned with the inner ~~the~~  
realities of an individual and with the way in which the subconscious will  
develop an apparently casual occurrence into a critical emotional  
experience. (Obtained from Maya Deren)

A STUDY IN CHOREOGRAPHY FOR THE CAMERA (American 1945) By Maya Deren  
and Tally Beatty. Obtained from Maya Deren. Here, with the use of  
cinematic techniques, space is no longer merely a place in which the  
dancer moves -- as is the field, the ritual temple, or the ~~theatre~~ theatre  
stage -- but is itself a dynamic participant in the choreography. And the  
camera is not merely an eye which watches, but is itself active in the  
creation of the performance.



PROGRAM NOTES

NOV. 1 CONTEMPORARY EXPERIMENTAL FILMS IN AMERICA

"*Fantasmagoria*" and "*Glen Falls Sequence*"

~~NON-OBJECTIVE FILMS~~ BY DOUGLAS CROCKWELL. Mr Crockwell

writes: "About eight years ago I set up an animation easel with the camera mounted overhead and the work area arranged much as a draughtsman's desk except that the working area consisted of several layers of glass slightly separated. The basic idea was to paint continuing pictures on these various layers with plastic paint, adding at times and removing at times and to a certain extent these early attempts were successful. This basic process was changed from time to time with varying results and I have made no attempt to stabilize the method. Somewhat as a consequence of this has been the fragmentary character of the work produced. At all times, however, the work has been tremendously interesting to me, so much so that I ~~cannot~~ have hardly been able to wait to see what is around the corner.

"More recently I have been working on other techniques entirely different from the aforementioned, which show a possibility that perhaps someday animations can be greatly quickened and made more fluid. This new process is very inexpensive, requires little equipment and more widespread attention on the part of the artist may be indicated."



50

Since the printing of the enclosed circular last fall, these films have been widely shown in various Colleges, Universities, Museums and Dance Schools, including the University of Michigan, St. John's College, Tulane University, Oberlin College, Smith College, Brooklyn College, the University of Southern California, and others. The following extracts from letters and reviews are indicative of the reception which these motion pictures have been accorded.

\* \* \* \* \*

"... Miss Deren's films are in the best tradition of progressive modern art. Such experimental research as hers is a fundamental requirement for the development of a contemporary esthetic. She has not only proposed but accomplished a method whereby the moving picture can again become an instrument of great artistic achievement..."

--George Heard Hamilton, Assistant Professor  
in the History of Art, Yale University

\* \* \* \* \*

"...The films were received with enthusiasm, not only for the unique experience they provided as cinematic art, but for the fruitful discussions they evoked wherever aesthetic problems are of concern. They served as a focus for insight and, along with Maya Deren's informative commentary, as successful illustrations of theory and practice..."

--John Malcolm Brinnin, English Department  
Vassar College

\* \* \* \* \*

"...I have found them most provocative and stimulating. The conception was quite unique and showed a rare creative ability not normally seen in such a realistic art form as the motion picture. The camera work was superb..."

--Horace W. Robinson, Acting Manager, Associated Students, University of Oregon

\* \* \* \* \*

"...(the films) use the free-flowing imagery of the subconscious so that it becomes neither the uncontrolled fantasy of surrealism, nor the academic symbolism of psychoanalysis, nor the sterile personification of literal allegory, but retains the profound suggestivity of its sources in a controlled pattern which becomes an organic relationship and an art expression which must be seen and read purely in terms of its artistry..."

--Kimon Friar, Professor of English,  
Amherst College

\* \* \* \* \*

"...Miss Deren's approach to the dance film has long been awaiting discovery by some such sensitive artist. Heretofore, the dance has either been filmed unimaginatively as a straight record of a stage performance, or, on the other hand, has been cut up and distorted to make a cameraman's holiday. In her approach we have the beginnings of a virtually new art of "chorecinema" in which the dance and the camera collaborate on the creation of a single work of art..."

--John Martin, Dance Critic, NEW YORK TIMES

\* \* \* \* \*

"...in her skillful transmutation of apparently meaningless events into the poetry of human understanding, Miss Deren has succeeded notably.... this new talent ... has seen beyond the trammels and conventions of previous abstract films, and has avoided most of their pitfalls in realizing her objective honestly and forcefully - cinema as an independent creative art form..."

--N. E. Meltzer, FILM NEWS, (Educational  
Film Library Ass'n, American Film Center)

\* \* \* \* \*

"...The enthusiastic interest of her self-created audiences is easy to understand, since Miss Deren is attacking all the fundamental problems of film making with novel vigor ... and sounds the clarion of the film which celebrates experience on a level with the older arts..."

---NEW MOVIES, reviewed by the Committee on  
Exceptional Motion Pictures, National  
Board of Review.

\* \* \* \* \*

Maya Deren has just been awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for further creative work in the field of motion pictures.



A Program Note

by James Broughton

The Potted Psalm is the work of Sidney Peterson, who is responsible for its genesis, its photography, and its artistic form.

The film undertakes a visual penetration of the crucial sub-verbal realms of our chaos, anxiety, and doom which have heretofore been primarily the preoccupation of ~~the important~~ <sup>serious</sup> modern writers. ~~The relation of the pictorial to~~ The necessary relation between dramatic pictorial imagery and significant literary analysis is deeply realized in Sidney Peterson, for besides his varied practice as sculptor, painter, and photographer, he is also a probing and imaginative novelist.

In exploring the inner complexities of a society after a world war, Peterson's camera might be said to progress from documentation into our violent collective unconscious, where the emotional myth unfolds in tragic disordered allegory, and the clinic is overwhelmed by the nightmare.

The Potted Psalm was filmed in San Francisco in the summer of 1946, with the collaborative assistance of James Broughton.



PLANS FOR WORK

My brother and I have sought to gain some proficiency in the creation of abstract animated sound films. We have searched for means of achieving control of a fluid graphic image, other than by hand drawing. We also have sought to find some means to create for ourselves a music counterpart to the graphic image. Our purposes were other than technological. We were willing to take the most direct and the simplest means and practically the first means becoming available because of our desire to see a new art form utilizing essentially the technology of this century begun in our time.

The films which are completed now are sufficient in themselves to demonstrate two points that we wish to make: First, a considerably more imposing element of the motion picture medium is accessible to the individual creator than has hitherto been granted. Second, the bi-sensory experience of auditory and visual form unified within a common time structure is intensified by the equal purity of both plastic and auditory elements.

These two observations point candidly to the potential scope of this project. A fundamentally new art form is in sight. Perhaps its accessibility to the individual creator will have a telling effect upon those sections of the motion picture industry already altering today under the influence of the smaller scale sixteen millimeter production methods. Television will be likely to accept the medium when its bi-sensory character as well as its economics are shown to be naturally suited to broadcasting. But above all its effect upon the realms of both music and art should be most significant. Music which has resisted to this day the new scientific musical resources will learn shortly of new concepts that are exclusively the product of these resources. Art likewise should be somehow affected by new concepts of a more pure form of dynamics.

The abstract film is not more abstract than music itself. It is in fact one extension into which music may henceforth evolve achieving in the process a new bi-sensory characteristic. At the same time the abstract film is not less abstract than the painting, say of Mondrian. Each seeks unity through a purity of plastic means. The researches of Neo-Plasticism lie at the basis of much modern art and architecture today. The abstract film creator, like the Neo-Plasticist, is concerned with related problems of relationship and the equivalence of space, time and form. His researches as they materialize may very well ultimately be seen to lie at the basis of film art.

The extent to which this project has been one of close collaboration must be stressed. The difference of our respective backgrounds has generally indicated allotment of routine tasks under a division of labor between my brother and me. But we are both fully involved in personal creative problems. We have been able to achieve a constant exchange of ideas in the realm of theory, yet each maintains his own independence in music and graphic

(CONTINUED)



composition. Not unmindful of the ultimate need for complete independence, all considerations of our immediate future have presumed a continuation of our present partnership. To begin with, separation would entail complete duplication of our equipment at the very outset. It is our belief that at least a year or two of study and composition lies ahead before we will have achieved sufficient individuality of style to justify personal signatures to finished works. In the meantime, there appears to be much to be gained by continued collaboration.

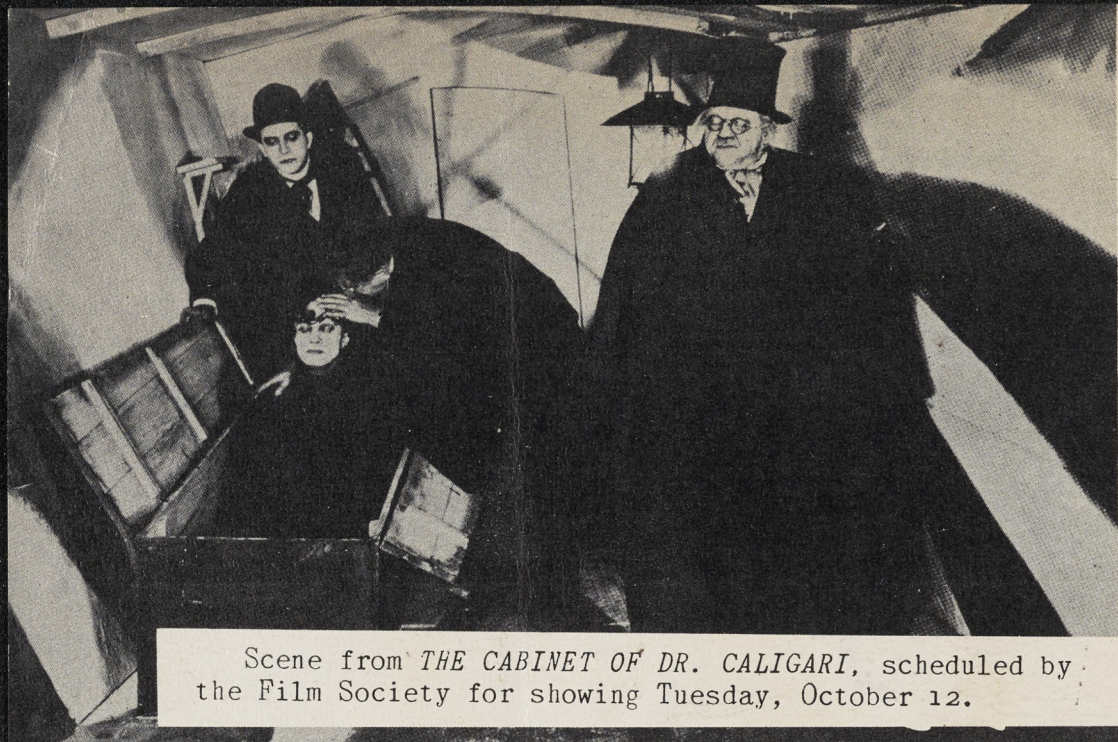
It is our desire and purpose to continue producing abstract films. We seek to gain a proficiency in the medium by composing more and more films. Just as a composer acquires mastery of the technique of his art through every-day contact with the materials of composition. We experience a disadvantage unknown to the composer, incidentally, since there are for us no schools or instructors given over to teaching so much as a primary class. Yet music composition is in fact related to our work while graphic structure is also to a somewhat lesser degree. During tenure of a fellowship we would expect to augment our present study of these subjects as much as possible. At present, for example, we are studying counterpoint with Mr. Adolf Weiss. We would continue this and perhaps seek other such opportunities for instruction.

Probably only one piece of our equipment needs further technical improvement in the immediate future. The sound recording device would be rebuilt utilizing materials now available that have been under restricted priority. A certain amount of research would be continued along lines that have been followed to date regarding use of other means than pendula as tone generators. At no time, however, would this project be allowed to interfere with our program of concentrated creative effort, since in our opinion the existing means are adequate.

In 1942 for a short period, a certain amount of experimenting was done on the possible use of our films as an agent of psychotherapy. Since then we have had consistent recurring suggestions that this field be further investigated. We have exhibited the films at the Armed Forces Moral Services offices in Hollywood and corresponded with the Surgeons General of the Army and Navy. Nothing specific has been done since in each case proceeding further has been stopped for lack of time and funds. In the near future a thorough search of possibilities in this field would be made and any proposals by authorities willing to utilize our resources experimentally would receive our fullest cooperation.

To attempt to evaluate and arrange in order of importance the motives of this project is to risk reversal of natural sequence. Yet beyond the essential creative motive this more can be said with security. We are engaged in searching out the fundamental structural elements inherent in a new art medium. To contribute sizeably to its development and appearance on the scene is obviously a strong motive. Therefore, in the future we would expect to retain and expand our contacts with individuals and groups whose activities or sympathies parallel our own. We would also naturally welcome opportunities to exhibit and further publicize our work.





Scene from *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI*, scheduled by the Film Society for showing Tuesday, October 12.

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## ALTERNATE TUESDAYS

8:30 in the evening  
at the

**Filmarte Theatre**

1228 North Vine  
Hollywood

*First Showings*  
TONIGHT and Wednesday  
(Tuesday)  
September 29

*Schedule for  
Rest of Series*

October 12  
October 26  
November 9  
November 23

# "TABU"

The FLAHERTY - MURNAU

*Idyll of the South Seas*

As "Tabu" has not been seen in this country for several years, and likely may never be shown again commercially (as the rights have reverted to Murnau's family in Germany), the public will be admitted both Tuesday and Wednesday.

On Tuesday, October 12—That macabre triumph *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI*, together with scenes from the original *GOLEM* and examples of current French *SUR-REALISM*.

Films for the remaining three Tuesday nights in the series have not been definitely set, but it is planned to include:

An evening of *EARLY CHAPLIN COMEDIES* and the famous *TILLIE'S PUNCTURED ROMANCE* with Chaplin and Marie Dressler.

The Len Lye *BIRTH OF A ROBOT*, and selected *DOCUMENTARIES* showing the current English technique in this field.

Eric von Stroheim's *GREED* with Zasu Pitts in a heavy dramatic role.

And an evening of Rudolph Valentino, with *FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE* and *MONSIEUR BEUCAIRE*.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS will also be scheduled from time to time on Wednesday evenings. Film Society membership tickets will be good for these in addition to the regular series. The first such added program will be Douglas Fairbanks in *ROBIN HOOD*, Wednesday, October 6.



Program notes for ~~Oct 18th~~ ?  
PROGRAM Nov. 1

MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON by Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid (1943)

This film begins in an objective reality and ends there. But the end is not a result of the beginning. The imagination has intercepted the flow, has seized upon a casual incident and, elaborating it into critical proportions, thrusts back into reality the product of its convolutions. This experience of inner-reality has been conceived in cinematic terms -- the dislocation of inanimate objects, the unexpected simultaneities and other such filmic concepts.

A STUDY IN CHOREOGRAPHY FOR CAMERA by Maya Deren and Talley Beatty (1945)

Here, with the use of cinematic techniques, space is no longer merely a place in which the dancer moves -- as is the field, the ritual temple, or the theatre stage -- but is itself a dynamic participant in the choreography. And the camera is not merely an eye which watches, but is itself active in the creation of the performance.

AT LAND Conceived and directed by Maya Deren. Technical assistance: Halla Hamon and Alexander Hammid. (1944)

The universe was once conceived as the passive stage upon which the dramatic conflict of human wills was enacted and resolved. But man's inventions have changed the nature of that universe, have put into motion new forces, towards which he has yet to invent a new relationship. We no longer travel over a stable, localized world to find our adventures, as did Ulysses. Rather, each individual is the center of a personal vortex; and the aggressive variety of adventures which swirl about and confront him are unified only by his personal identity.

\* \* \*

The impetus behind analytical action, behind the desire to understand the separate elements of a reality, is the ambition to achieve a new relationship between those elements, and to thus create a new form, a new reality. And each new combination confers upon the elements a new value, according to their function in that relationship. So in art ... creative action consists not in the affirmation and description of an existant reality, but in the effort to so relate the elements of human experience as to create a new reality.

In cinema, such a concept of creative action has been neglected. The analogy between the lens and the eye, based on the physical similarity between them, has led to a recording of the forms of reality and those of literature, drama and painting. But cinema, to be creative, must do more than record. The mechanism behind the lens, like the brain behind the eye, can evaluate the objects before it, can decide them attractive or repulsive, casual or surprising. Above all, the analogy must be extended to understand that the strip of film is the memory of the camera. Just as man is not content to merely reconstruct an original chronology, but in his art, conceives new relationships between remembered elements, so the film-maker can create new realities by the manipulation of the celluloid memories at his disposal.

The labor to achieve inspired, intelligent form is a single continuity, a work in progress which is eventually interrupted when the dynamic consciousness which it reflects ceases. From time to time one may pause to give integrated shape to a stage of one's progress, in order to best pursue it further. And so these films have each been brought to an end, in order to be better abandoned.

These films are available for rental or sale.  
Address inquiries to  
Maya Deren, 61 Morton St., New York 14, N.Y.



possibilities of interpretation, instead of distant and romantic subjects. Somewhat clumsy to our eyes, it broke fresh ground.

---

### Berlin

Berlin - Symphony of a City (1927 German)  
Production: Fox-Europa, Berlin - Scenarios Karl  
Mayer and Ruttman; Photography: Karl Freund,  
Kuntze, Baberski, Schaffer. Music: Edmund Meisel

---

It was upon cutting and tempo that  
Berlin relied chiefly for its symphonic effect  
a more exciting approach to ~~reality~~ reality by  
tempo and movements - a superficial  
observation - Real documentary attempts  
to explore the underlying motives.



PROGRAM NOTES

NOV 8 FANTASY INTO DOCUMENTARY

RIEN QUE LES HEURES 1926 (France) Directed by @Alberto

Cavalcanti; photography by Jimmy Rogers; design by M. Mirovitch.

Thus, in 1925 Cavalcanti in Rien que les heures was using the ripe - with intelligence and restraint, and was exploring the surrealist methods of free mental association of images

P. 86 Spottwooddie, a grammar of the film

a symphonic structure. By symphonic we mean a predominantly composition of form in itself - a massing of shapes, and rhythmic content to produce a unified whole. In a sense the symphonic film is abstract, but ~~with the exception that~~ in conception and structure only - the realistic objectivity is the core of the design, and a natural flow, or sequence of logically related ideas to the unperceived.

was the rhythms, albeit tentatively, of the pure film - but it has the heps and dist which are the apparatus of the social reformer -

One of the first documentaries -

shot in 4 weeks - cost 25,000 francs - first time to express the life of a city on the screen. It was the first film to recognize, in the beautiful and the sordid facts of life around us.



## Program Notes -

Nov 8 Fantasy into Documentary

~~That~~ the documentary film in itself ~~cannot be~~ being a separate development of cinema, cannot be classified as either experimental or avant-garde in the sense ~~meant~~ meant here, although

The documentary film, being primarily concerned with the dramatization of fact, ~~the seeking~~ cannot be termed experimental or avant-garde in the sense meant here, although experimental ~~the documentary~~ ~~must~~ has most certainly been ~~But~~ in the development of documentary ~~the~~ experimental attitude has most certainly been the dominant approach. The best documentaries are intensely visual, intensely cinematic, — with their ~~process~~ ~~problems~~ of seeking the underlying motives of factual problems, and presenting them entirely in moving pictures. And documentary, as developed by the British School, was one of the first intelligent ~~the~~ ~~development~~ ~~usage~~ of sound as a creative factor with ~~the~~ moving images. But documentary is primarily educational ~~the~~ aimed at providing information, understanding and explanation, and ~~does not~~ ~~do~~ doing so in aesthetic terms. ~~However~~ the seeds of documentary were sown in films like *Rien Que Les Heures* and *Berlin*, produced as aesthetic experiments at a time when documentaries, as a classification, did not exist.

*Rien Que Les Heures* — etc. This was the first film to ~~employ~~ <sup>interpret</sup> the ordinary face of



a city ~~events~~ in dramatic terms, employing <sup>cross-sections of</sup> the beautiful and the sordid facts in an effort to present a rounded interpretation ~~in the life~~ of one day in the life of a city. It was shot in 4 ~~weeks~~ at a cost of 25,000 francs.

As a composition, *Rien Que Les Vents* has <sup>often</sup> been called 'symphonic'; that <sup>to</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>structure</sup> ~~construction~~ of the work was considered as a whole, a unit, with a rising and falling of tempo, a desire to compose the coming and ~~the~~ going of shapes into a unified ~~construction~~ <sup>form</sup> - an architecture. It ~~may~~ ~~seem~~ ~~indeed~~ ~~to~~ ~~us~~ (may be difficult for our modern eyes to ~~detect~~ recognize the underlying effort at this symphonic approach. ~~as there~~ ~~are~~ ~~so~~ ~~many~~ ~~clumsy~~ ~~and~~ ~~primitive~~ ~~as~~ the flow is somewhat clumsy and primitive.

But, as in all these earlier films, the contemporary spectator must ~~not~~ overlook the technical crudities, perhaps even come to accept them in the ~~same~~ same way we ~~overlook~~ accept as part of the whole, the technical crudities of any primitive work of art. The technique, or lack of it, becomes a part of the work's character. This attitude is difficult to accept in films because technical polish has become as all-pervading & ~~omnipotent~~ <sup>omnipotent</sup>.

The symphonic structure, ~~as~~ <sup>one might say</sup> was developed by one man: D. W. Griffith, at least twelve years earlier, and ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> symphonic style reached its apogee in Eisenstein's "*Potemkin*."



But in the film's history so far, how else could it have been?

In spite of being continually reminded that the cinema is a machine,

<sup>are inclined</sup> we ~~tend~~ to ~~lose~~ disregard the implications of this fact. ~~We must~~

~~say it once again.~~ <sup>It implies, that among other things, that</sup> And the cinema, being a scientific apparatus,

needed <sup>by</sup> tremendous refinement, both in technical perfection and a

Theory of Use. <sup>at least</sup> ~~Since~~, for twenty years after the cinema's birth it was considered by the intelligensia as being nothing but a kind of magical toy not even worthy of entertainment, its development was left in the hands of relatively uncultured people. No one else would touch it.

<sup>But</sup> When it began to display a primitive aesthetic character of its own - when, in 1914, Griffith's BIRTH OF A NATION proved that a potent new medium of expression was at hand, the moment was too late to lament the direction. It ~~was~~ already launched towards the rapids. The industrial basis - the vicious cycle of producer to renter to exhibitor to audience was already formed.

Therefore it is completely impossible to make a <sup>distinction</sup> ~~connection~~ between the commercial film and the non-commercial film, and expect to find the <sup>true</sup> artistic tradition contained in the latter. The uses to ~~which~~ which the film have been put to are many, and strangely enough we find the loftiest moments in the commercial film, ~~as~~ <sup>For example much</sup> as well as in the non-commercial. ~~Indeed, the bulk of experimentation during the twenties~~ <sup>was carried on in</sup> ~~came from~~ the huge commercial studios of Germany, as well as ~~from~~ <sup>in</sup> the avante-garde movement in Paris. The difficulty of drawing a line is obvious, and it does not exist ~~between~~ commercial and non-commercial.

What do we ~~mean~~ ~~mean~~ by Art In Cinema? The answer to this would be the answer to the question: what do we mean by art? Thus a ~~discussion of the question~~ the only basis upon which to look at the ~~artistic character of the film~~



~~across the nature of the film is one character~~

What do we mean by Art in Cinema? The answer to this must have <sup>find let by answer the question</sup> its root in the answer to the question: What is cinema?

The inherent character of the film, being visual-motionary, any conception of its use other than in those terms is false. It is as if one produced a ballet without choreography. This ephemeral, visual-motionary character has its being in the strip of celluloid itself, moving in front of an aperture, and then moving on. When the wheel stops the celluloid is dead. When the wheel begins we have motion, which is life - of a kind - we ~~do~~ have also the entire range of plastic forms in movement, and what is more ~~important~~ important, we have totally different forms following one upon the other in a rhythmic sequence as in music, to set up ~~a sequence of~~ emotional responses in the mind of the spectator.

Upon this simple basis then must the artistic ~~value~~ <sup>the</sup> worth of A film depend. At the risk of repeating another threadbare platitude it is well to state that this simple cinematic basis has nothing whatsoever to do with the Stage or the Novel, although in its own voracious need for a ~~tradition~~ tradition it has drawn heavily upon both of these forms of expression. Thus, because of the precedent of the story film we find it difficult to throw off the necessity for a logical sequence of literary events when we sit down to see a film. But in truth, what is a "logical sequence?" We might as justifiably demand of music a "logical sequence" of notes.

This is not to disparage the story idea in cinema. The inherent character of the film made itself apparent as such only after years in which millions of feet of film were taken of two general types of subject matter - scenes of actual events, and fictional scenes posed and acted out before the camera. Neither of these classifications



by the intelligensia and the critical public as being not even  
worthy  
~~worthy~~ of entertainment, let alone art, or a new medium of  
expression. Its development was left in the hands of uncritical  
and unaesthetic people. No one else would touch it. When it  
began to ~~display~~ display a primitive aesthetic character of its own -  
when, in 1914 Griffith's BIRTH OF A NATION proved that a  
powerful new medium of expression was at hand, it was too late  
to lament the cinema's ~~commercial~~ <sup>commercial</sup> foundation. The groundwork  
for the industrial production of ~~entertainment~~ <sup>film</sup> was already  
laid. And it has often been pointed out that without this  
~~from there~~ industrial commercial basis, development of the  
machine would not have been possible.

However, when we apply the ~~word~~ <sup>word</sup> "experimental" to the  
cinema, we see that it becomes a very loose term. There has  
always been experimental work carried on within the big  
commercial studios, particularly during the twenties. It was  
practically always governed by the box office, but that did  
not prevent <sup>serious</sup> works of artistic integrity <sup>from</sup> <sup>ing</sup> emerge now and ~~then~~  
then. Indeed, experimental work at last became the nemesis of  
the huge German studios. Beginning with CALIGARI and ending  
with METROPOLIS, the German studios finally broke their  
financial back on greater and greater experiments. But here we  
come to the crux, for the experiments were not aimed so much at  
artistic integrity, <sup>as</sup> ~~but~~ at competition in a world market.

The term "avant-garde" was first applied to the cinema  
in Paris during the ~~post-war~~ <sup>the</sup> post-war collapse of  
worn out ~~artistic~~ <sup>artistic</sup> conventions, although even before the  
war there were painters <sup>like Leopold Survage</sup> who experimented with the cinema as a  
means of <sup>broadening</sup> ~~breaking~~ the limitations of graphic expression.



Because a certain group of films of the same genre happen to be lumped together under the title "avantgarde" it should not be supposed that they have at their core any theoretical factor in common. It is too vague a classification and it has come to mean too many things. The true avant-garde was a soft-pedaled revolt in any direction as long as it led away from common established values, and as long as it had a philisophical basis~~coohe~~ -- a vanguard experimental attitude, as the name implies. But trus surrealism, if it is possible to define it at all, was a revolt against this revolt, against the intellectual snobbery that trailed in the wake of avant-garde. Surrealism was anarchial. Employing the most - ~~co~~ what to ordinary standards is called "unhealthy" - manifestations, as a means, it strove to be basically healthy in its ends, arriving at a super-real staement of fact. As artistic nihilism it succeeded, but it quickly defeated its original tenet by attracting even more intellectual snobbery that the antogonist. The reason for this, ampng other reasons, is that it discarded the common usage of the meaning of logic and drew its motivation from ~~the~~ dreams and the sub-conscious - but with~~o~~ this important feature: the surrealists did not analyze themselves or their motives. That was left for the parlor-freudians, the protoype of the intellectual snob.



When writers ~~like~~ like ~~D~~ Guillaume Apollinaire and Maurice Reynal heralded these attempts with serious enthusiasm, it helped establish a free experimental attitude toward the new medium that eventually attracted a swarm of artists, and it was then that the avant-garde cinema flourished as a vital, consistent movement. With a camera and some raw film an artist could go just as far as he wished, and he could be assured of an audience. These were the days when artists, dilettantes, poseurs, and the avant-garde intelligensia at large flocked to the ~~theatres~~ special theatres to see what someone had to say via the cinema.



Because a certain group of films of the same genre happened to be lumped together under the term "avant-garde" it should not be supposed that they have at their core any theoretical factor

in common. It is too vague a classification. <sup>and it has ~~not~~ covered too many approaches</sup> The avant-garde was

a soft pedaled revolt in any direction as long as it led away from common <sup>established</sup> values. - an advance <sup>vanguard</sup> experimental attitude, as the name implies. But <sup>the</sup> surrealism <sup>if it is possible to define it at all,</sup> was a revolt against this revolt,

against the intellectual snobbery that surrounded the avant-garde. Surrealism was anarchial. <sup>Employing</sup> Expressing the most - what to

ordinary standards is ~~called~~ "unhealthy" manifestations as a means, it strove to be basically healthy in its ends. <sup>arriving</sup> ~~at~~

~~arriving at a super-real statement of fact. Or perhaps the process, beginning with~~ As artistic nihilism it succeeded, but it quickly defeated its original tenet by ~~gathering into itself~~ <sup>even more</sup> attracting even more intellectual snobbery than ~~its progenitor~~ before. The reason for this, among others, is that it discarded the common use of the meaning of logic and drew its motivation from the dreams and the subconscious, - but with this important angle: <sup>on their own motives</sup> the surrealists did not analyze themselves. That was left for <sup>the</sup> psycho-freudians. ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> prototype of the intellectual snob.

~~The symbolic film is one of the most~~ In ~~the medium of~~ cinema the surrealists found a perfect medium of expression, since it was capable of a succession of images ~~in time~~ moving in the dimension of time, capable of ~~the~~ expressing the frightful sharpness of reality that exists in dreams, and of the emotional montage engendered in dreams.



by  
meant ~~with~~ the phrase "...the tremendous possibilities of the cinema."

~~So all of~~ <sup>fictionalized affairs</sup> This participation in the private ~~lives~~ of others,  
— but without ~~one~~ shouldering any of the responsibilities - like a poor deaf-mute relative - resulted in the precedent of the story film. The point being made here is that the story film is not necessarily opposed to pure cinematic expression; it is just that the story film became the <sup>dominant</sup> ~~dominating~~ form for it. — ~~so dominant that it is impossible to~~ in fact, that the ~~pure character of its~~ latent, inherent character of the medium ~~film book~~ was almost lost beneath the purely technical and unwieldy tool of illustrating novels. — and illustrating them rather badly at that. ~~thousands of~~ it is this heritage of ~~badly illustrated~~ <sup>in motion</sup> ~~illustrated~~ novels and ~~moving~~ National Geographic magazines that makes it so difficult <sup>from us</sup> to accept simple movement itself, for itself, unattached to literary logic. In one sense, it is ~~the same~~ exactly analogous to non-objective painting which among other things, proved that what could be told in ~~book~~ <sup>print</sup> should not be told on canvas, nor what is told ~~there~~ <sup>told</sup> on canvas, could not be ~~told~~ <sup>told</sup> with printed words.

Nevertheless, the possibilities of expressing



growing directly out of <sup>the</sup> avant-garde  
movement in Paris, this film ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~became~~  
the first effort to depict creatively the life  
of a city in cinema. Thus it becomes,  
in a way, one of the first documentary  
films. It was ~~shot in~~ filmed in four  
weeks at a cost of 25,000 francs.



The scorn for the experimental idea is not unusual. ~~The experimentalists~~ For twenty years after the cinema's birth it was considered by the intelligensia and the critical public as being not even worthy of entertainment - let alone art, or a new medium. Its development was carried on by non-aesthetic persons, ~~unliterate~~ ~~uneducated~~ ~~and~~ no one else would touch it. When it began to evolve a primitive aesthetic character of its own - when The Birth of a Nation proved that a powerful new medium of expression was at hand, the moment was too late to criticise the commercial direction in which it had gone. But it was only through this commercial direction that technical development was possible. The cinema is a machine, we are told again and again.



Because ~~the~~ a certain ~~group~~ group of films  
of the same genre happened to be lumped  
together under the term "avant-garde". It should  
not be supposed that they have at their core  
<sup>theoretical</sup> any factor in common. It is too vague ~~and~~ <sup>soft-pedaled</sup>  
a classification. The avant-garde was a revolt,  
a development — an advance experimental  
attitude — as the name implies. But ~~the~~  
surrealism was a revolt against the avant-  
garde, and the intellectual snobbery it so  
fluently surrounded itself with. Surrealism  
~~contained~~ <sup>contained</sup> recognizable overtones of anarchy. ~~With~~ <sup>expressing</sup>  
the most unhealthy manifestations as a means,  
it was basically healthy in its ends.



# **series XVII**

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MOTION PICTURE SHOWINGS  
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**american contemporary gallery**



**Series XVII beginning July 11 and 12, 1946 at 8:30 p.m.**

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With Series XVII in the history of the motion picture we are going back to the beginnings with a short survey of the film in America. The need for re-examination and critical analysis of film making has been felt by many and these programs are in answer to the requests for available material. Further programs continuing the survey will follow if sufficient interest is shown in this series.

**Clara Grossman**



series XVII: **A SHORT SURVEY OF THE FILM IN AMERICA**

JULY 11 AND 12

**The Development of Narrative**

- 1895 The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots
- 1896 Wash Day Troubles
- 1902 A Trip to the Moon, Melies
- 1903 The Great Train Robbery
- 1905 Rescued by Rover
- 1910 Possibility of A War in the Air
- 1912 Queen Elizabeth, with Sara Bernhardt

JULY 18 AND 19

**The Rise of the American Film**

- 1909 A Corner in Wheat, by D. W. Griffith
- 1912 The New York Hat, by D. W. Griffith  
with Mary Pickford and Lionel Barrymore
- 1914 A Fool There Was, with Theda Bara

JULY 25 AND 26

**The Basis of Modern Technique**

- 1916 Intolerance, by D. W. Griffith

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AUGUST 1 AND 2

**The Basis of Modern Technique**

- 1903 Uncle Tom's Cabin, by Edwin S. Porter
- 1921 Tol'able David, by Henry King  
with Richard Barthelmess

AUGUST 8 AND 9

**The German Influence**

- 1928 Hands, by Stella Simon
- 1927 Sunrise, by F. W. Murnau  
with Janet Gaynor

AUGUST 15 AND 16

**The Talkies**

- 1927 The Jazz Singer (two scenes)  
with Al Jolson
- 1927 Newsreel, with George Bernard Shaw
- 1928 Steamboat Willie, Disney Cartoon
- 1930 All Quiet on the Western Front,  
by Lewis Milestone



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# PROGRAM NOTES

## MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON (1943)

by Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid

This first film is concerned with the relationship between the imaginative and the objective reality. The film begins in actuality and, eventually, ends there. But in the meantime the imagination, here given as a dream, intervenes. It seizes upon a casual incident and, elaborating it into critical proportions, thrusts back into reality the product of its convolutions. The protagonist does not suffer some subjective delusion, of which the world outside remains independent, if not oblivious; on the contrary, she is, in actuality, destroyed by an imaginative action.

Such a development is, obviously, not a function of some "realistic" logic; it is a necessity, a destiny established as a logic of the film itself. Thus the formal whole is, itself, the reality and the meaning of the film. It is a whole created out of the elements of reality—people, places and ob-

jects—but these are so combined as to form a new reality, a new context which defines them according to their function within it. Consequently, they are not symbols in the sense of referring to some meaning or value outside the film—to be interpreted according to some established system of psychology or in terms of some private, subjective association which they may evoke; they are images whose value and meaning is defined and confined by their actual function in the context of the film as a whole.

In this case, the whole is a form realized by the creative exercise of the film instrument, including camera and editing; the inner logic is a function of such concepts as the dislocation of inanimate objects, the reiteration of singular events, and other such film realities.

## AT LAND (1944)

Conceived and directed by Maya Deren. Technical assistance: Hella Heyman and Alexander Hammid

The universe was once conceived as the passive stage upon which the dramatic conflict of human wills was enacted and resolved. Today man has discovered that that which seemed simple and stable is, instead, complex and volatile; his own inventions have put into motion new forces, toward which he has yet to invent a new relationship. Unlike Ulysses, he can no longer travel over a universe stable in space and in time, to find adventures; nor can he resolve intimate antagonisms with an adversary sportingly suitable in stature. Rather, each individual is the

center of a personal vortex; and the aggressive variety and enormity of the adventures which swirl about and confront him are unified only by his personal identity.

Being both a time and space art, film is especially capable, as an art instrument, of creating a form in which the integrity of the individual identity is counterpointed to the volatile character of a relativistic universe. This dynamic relationship, with all its emotional and ideological implications, is the central concern of this film.

## A STUDY IN CHOREOGRAPHY FOR CAMERA (1945)

by Maya Deren and Talley Beatty.

The space of the field, the ritual temple and the theater stage have been, historically, a *place* within which dancers moved, creating, in terms of their own capacities and human limitations, the physical patterns of emotions and ideas. In this film, through an exploitation of cinematic techniques, space is itself a dynamic participant in the choreography. This is, in a sense, a duet between space

and a dancer—a duet in which the camera is not merely an observant, sensitive eye, but is itself creatively responsible for the performance.

Since film is a space art, the logic, the integrity of this film is visual; but since it is also a time art, it is not integrated in the plastic terms of painting, but strives for a new dimension of integration altogether.

## RITUAL IN TRANSFIGURED TIME (1945-46)

Conceived and directed by Maya Deren. Photographed by Hella Heyman. Choreographic collaboration: Frank Westbrook. Principal performers: Rita Christiani and Frank Westbrook.

A Ritual is an action distinguished from all others in that it seeks the realization of its purpose through the exercise of form. In this sense ritual is art; and, even historically, all art derives from ritual. In ritual, the form is the meaning. More specifically, the quality of movement is not a merely decorative factor; it is the meaning itself of the movement. In this sense, this film is a dance.

This quality of individual movement, and, above all, the choreography of the whole, is mainly conferred and created by filmic means—the varying camera speeds, the relating of gestures which were, in reality, unrelated, the repetition of patterns so complex as to be unique in actuality, and other such means. In this sense, the film confers dance upon non-dancers, except for a passage in which the large pattern and the individual action coincide, briefly, in intention. Thus the elements of the whole derive their meaning from a pattern which they did not them-

selves consciously create; just as a ritual—which depersonalizes by the use of masks, voluminous garments, and homogeneous group movements—fuses all individual elements into a transcendent tribal power towards the achievement of some extraordinary grace.

Such efforts are reserved for the accomplishment of some critical metamorphosis, and, above all, for some inversion towards life: the passage from sterile winter into fertile spring; mortality into immortality; the child-son into the man-father; or, as in this film, the widow into the bride.

Being a film ritual, it is achieved not in spatial terms alone, but in terms of a Time created by the camera. Time here is not an emptiness to be measured by a spatial activity which may fill it. In this film it not only actually creates many of the actions and events, but constitutes the special integrity of the form as a whole.





*The home of New Directions, Robin Hill, Norfolk, Connecticut*

## *New Directions Completes Its First Decade*

► A reconverted stable in Norfolk, Connecticut, has housed for ten years one of the unique publishing institutions of America. This year marks the completion of the first decade in the history of New Directions, the only publishing firm, so far as we know, ever founded by a college sophomore. (The firm of Stone and Kimball was founded in 1893 by two Harvard undergraduates in their junior year, Herbert Stone and Ingalls Kimball.)

James Laughlin, editor and owner of the house, was a Harvard undergraduate when he issued, as a distinctly extra-curricular part of his work, the first "New Directions Anthology." He admits that he knew little of the details of publishing at that time, relied chiefly on his own discretion as a writer to gather up some of the best representative works of young authors and poets, many of whom were a part of the literary avant-garde. Since issuing this first volume, the firm, which has remained small in size but not in ambition, has published approximately 145 books, including forthcoming fall titles. As a tribute both to the selective ability of the editors, and the faith of the firm in its own products, all but 20 or 30 of these books are still in print.

Mr. Laughlin comes from Pittsburgh, but says that his book life only began with his school days at the Choate School in the East, where he came under the influence of

Dudley Fitts. New Directions is bringing out a new edition of Fitts' "Latin American Anthology" this year, a volume which contains both original texts and translations, runs to 700 pages, is considered the definitive book in its field. From Choate, Mr. Laughlin went to Harvard, where his active book career began.

Life at Harvard was exciting enough, Mr. Laughlin recalls. While he was a member of the staff of the *Advocate*, he was instrumental in having printed in that magazine a story by Henry Miller. The result of the appearance of the story was that the *Advocate* was both banned and burned. After he had formed his house, Mr. Laughlin published several books of Miller's, including "The Cosmological Eye" and "The Air-Conditioned Nightmare." Two of Mr. Miller's books, which are not available in this country, proved to be the best-selling English language novels on the continent during the war among American soldiers. Reports are that over 50,000 copies of "Tropic of Cancer" and "Tropic of Capricorn" were dispensed to GIs stationed in France in the past two years.

While the Norfolk home of New Directions houses the editorial offices of the firm, sales and production departments are at 500 Fifth Avenue, New York City. The staff consists of about half-a-dozen people who, for the most part, have no particular



titles. Informality is a keynote of the house, and the personnel is apt to vary seasonally, since most New Directions books are published in the fall and winter, and added help is needed at that time.

#### EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS ARE AUTHORS

Mr. Laughlin's two chief editorial assistants are both authors in their own right, as is the publisher himself, who last year produced a book of poems entitled "Some Natural Things." Hubert Creekmore, whose book of poetry, "Long Reprieve", is on the winter list, is the author of "Fingers of Night" published by Appleton-Century. Mr. Creekmore, who is in his late twenties, comes from Jackson, Mississippi, and is related by marriage to Eudora Welty, author of "Delta Wedding." He has written three volumes of poetry in addition to the Appleton novel, and spent his wartime service with the Navy in the South Pacific.

#### THE LITTLE MAN PRESS, FROM CINCINNATI TO BARI

The youngest member of the editorial staff is Robert Lowry, who began his novel-writing career in Cincinnati at the age of 13, and who at 19 was operating his own handpress in that city. The young proprietor of The Little Man Press solicited manuscripts from Thomas Mann, William March, and William Saroyan, was pleased but not too much surprised when they sent him original stories for publication. The press books were in excellent typographical taste, and enjoyed a sale in bookstores, for example, the Gotham Book Mart and Ben Abramson's Argus bookshop.

During the war, Mr. Lowry was a member of Elliott Roosevelt's photographic unit. He borrowed an army mimeographing machine and, in his spare time, went about his chosen work of publishing once again. He got ahead nicely until he ran afoul of a colonel who disliked James Joyce intensely, and objected to Mr. Lowry's printing anti-war stories on government property.

His mimeographing machine taken away from him, Mr. Lowry was pressless until he reached Italy and discovered, near Bari, an Italian printer who understood a little Eng-

lish. This event marked the rebirth of The Little Man Press, this time called by its Italian name. Mr. Lowry has written two books since his discharge from the army. New Directions will publish his "Casualty" in the fall; Appleton his "The Big Cage" in the winter.

Alvin Lustig, whose sister acts as the business manager of the firm, does much of the designing for New Directions books. He once attended Frank Lloyd Wright's school, and designs not only books but a variety of other projects from offices to billboards.

His latest contribution has been the redesigning of all the jackets for the 15 titles in the *New Classics Series*, which now sell for \$1.50 each. Since the addition of the new jackets, according to the publisher, sales of the *New Classics* (PW, March 23, 1946) have jumped 300 per cent. Five new titles will be added to the series this fall; including "The Wanderer" by Alain-Fournier, with an introduction by Havelock Ellis; Baudelaire's "Flowers of Evil," translated by Geoffrey Wagner, to be issued in a bi-lingual text; D. H. Lawrence's "Selected Poems" with an essay by Kenneth Rexroth; Lawrence's "The Man Who Died"; and Kay Boyle's "Monday Night".

#### SALES REPRESENTATIVES COVER THE COUNTRY

In charge of the New York office is Eleanor Florio, occasionally helped by one of the editors. At one time Mr. Laughlin handled a large part of the sales himself, but a few years ago arrangements were made with Duell, Sloan & Pearce to take care of New Directions distribution. Today, however, the house is represented in the East by George Stewart, on the Coast by Carl Smalley, and in the South by Clinton Balmer Associates.

While sales of individual titles are apt to be small, as the house issues books of special literary interest, New Directions has discovered that in most cities there is a compact, eager market for its books. Printings of new books vary considerably in size, depending on the book. A first book of poems by an as-yet-unknown writer will have a first printing of, perhaps, 1,000 copies; for featured titles, the new edition



of Baudelaire mentioned above, for instance, a printing of 8,000 copies is contemplated.

Rising production costs have, of course, been particularly difficult for New Directions, which does not have the benefit of mass runs. The volume of sales has shown a continued rise over the ten years, and is currently large despite the fact that few new books were brought out this spring. Mr. Laughlin is hard at work attempting to keep manufacturing costs, which have in some cases gone up 200 per cent, down to a point at which it will be unnecessary to raise prices.

#### ADVERTISING EMPHASIZES LITERARY MEDIA

While the yearly advertising budget is light—1945's expenditure of \$5,000 was the firm's alltime high—New Directions has found it most profitable to place its ads in literary periodicals, for example, the *Kenyon Review* and the *Saturday Review of Literature*. Certain titles respond rapidly to small, carefully-placed advertisements. When Djuna Barnes' "Nightwood," originally published some years ago by Harcourt, Brace, and now in the *New Classics Series*, was advertised in the *Nation* and the *New Republic* recently, 6,000 copies of the book were sold within a few weeks.

In the ten years since its inception, the goal of the house has not altered. It has been to publish books of artistic merit only, and to bring out the works of many poets, novelists and essayists whose books might otherwise have never been published. Mr. Laughlin is glad that a number of writers whose first works he championed are becoming recognized throughout the world, and that others, whom he rescued from publishers who had found their books unremunerative, are finally coming into their own.

He points to the case of the Czech writer, Franz Kafka, about whom there is at present so much interest that no less than four publishers are readying books about him. Philip Rahv is doing a book for Reynal & Hitchcock, Paul Goodman is writing a study for Vanguard (1947), and Charles Neider has a forthcoming Kafka book on the Oxford list (1947). When

Kafka's "Amerika" was originally published several years ago, only 800 copies were sold. Recently, a new edition was brought out by New Directions and within a few weeks a printing of 6,000 copies was completely sold out. Coming, on the New Directions list, is "The Kafka Problem," an anthology of criticism in which Angel Flores has assembled and translated essays of the author, who died in 1924, by critics in England, France, America, Germany, Middle Europe, and the Scandinavian countries.

The cosmopolitan nature of New Directions lists makes it inevitable that books published by the house are often translated into many foreign languages. Henry Miller, for example, has been done in Greek, Portuguese, and the Scandinavian tongues, among others.

A collection of New Directions authors in the last decade would include a Trappist monk, a handful of French symbolists, Henry James, Gertrude Stein, D. H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, Karl Shapiro, Boris Pasternak, Saroyan, Gide, James T. Farrell, Tennessee Williams, and Nathaniel West of "Miss Lonelyhearts" fame.

#### THE COMMON DENOMINATOR: NO POLITICAL FRONTIERS

The only least common denominator among all these widely assorted authors is their contribution to the world of literary thought, divorced from political, racial or geographical boundaries. While few books on current affairs are brought out (although the authors on the New Directions lists range from fascist to communist in political views), the house will publish this fall Julien Cornell's "New World Primer," an American lawyer's analysis of the problems of international organization, and a book which the firm thinks will supplement Emery Reves' popular "Anatomy of Peace" (*Harper*).

Highlights of New Directions' new publishing ventures are the *Modern Readers Series* and the *Selected Writings Series*. The former series will present new editions of great books that have gone out of print, the reprints to sell for about \$3.50. The first title will be Italo Svevo's "The Confessions of Zeno," a modern novel related to the discoveries of Freud. Future books,



it is hoped, will include James' "Princess Casamassima", Melville's "Confidence Man," Wyndham Lewis' "Apes of God," the novels of Céline, and Ford Madox Ford's Tietjens novels.

The *Selected Writings Series*, which will start off with "The Selected Writings of Dylan Thomas," will offer one-volume representative selections of important modern writers whose works are difficult to obtain or which have not before been adequately translated into English. Coming volumes, also at \$3.50, will be devoted to Henry Miller, Jean Cocteau, and the Russian author, Boris Pasternak. Each volume will carry an essay on the writer in question by a competent critic.

#### NEW TITLES IN MAKERS OF MODERN LITERATURE SERIES

In addition to the *New Classics Series*, already mentioned, several new titles will be forthcoming in the *Makers of Modern Literature Series*, the other series which the house has been publishing for some time. New books, at \$2, in this series will include "E. A. Robinson" by Yvor Winters, "Oscar Wilde" by Edouard Roditi, "André Gide" by Van Meter Ames, and "R. L. Stevenson" by David Daiches.

Among other forthcoming books, not in the various series, will be "Residence on Earth" by Pablo Neruda, one of Chile's leading poets; "Wonder What Ever Became of Human Beings" by the prolific Kenneth Patchen, whose "Sleepers Awake" has just been published (*PW*, July 13); "Soviet Short Stories," translated by B. G. Guernsey; James Hanley's "The Dark House"; and "A Man In the Divided Sea" by Thomas Merton, the young Trappist monk who has been called the most important new Catholic poet since Gerard Manley Hopkins.

In the field of drama, the fall will bring García Lorca's "La Casa de Bernarda Alba," translated by Richard O'Connell and James Graham. The play, by the Spanish author shot by the fascists in the Spanish Civil War, is considered by contemporary critics as one of the most influential plays written in this generation. Lorca has been receiving much attention in this country, and several of his works have already been translated.

The "Little Magazines Anthology," edited

by Vivienne Koch, will be published next year. Mr. Laughlin, who owns one of the most complete sets of the little magazines extant, says there is a twin purpose in issuing the anthology. In the first place, it will serve to reprint the first published stories of a number of writers who have since achieved national and international recognition. Then, too, it will resurrect works of that intriguing group of authors who, with one or two stories, blazed brightly for a short while and then were heard from no more.

Mr. Laughlin, a ski enthusiast, is doing the text for "Skiing East and West" which Hastings House will publish this fall. The book, which will be \$5, has many large photographs by Helene Fisher of most of the important ski centers in America. Primarily a pictorial book designed to show the beauties of the sport, it will not be a manual of instruction in the art of skiing.

#### PERIODICALS DISTRIBUTED BY NEW DIRECTIONS

New Directions, though doing little importing, will handle in the fall imported copies of "New Road," the English equivalent of the New Directions Annuals. This will be the fourth number of the English annual, and will be priced at about \$3.50. The latest New Directions Annual is the ninth in the domestic series, with the tenth edition planned for early in 1947.

Recently New Directions announced that it would serve as distributor for the new quarterly magazine *Viva*, edited by the poet José García Villa. Each number of the magazine will be devoted to the work of an outstanding modern poet, the first to e. e. Cummings. Another magazine, which appears at irregular intervals, and which is distributed by New Directions, is *Pharos*. This periodical is dedicated to works of a serious literary nature which are too short for book publication, but too long for regular magazines. Number 1-2, which contained Tennessee Williams' play, "Battle of Angels," is sold out, but Numbers 3, 4 and 5, which contain respectively Harry Levin's "Toward Stendahl," Pound's "The Unwavering Pivot of Confucius," and Nabokov's "Seven Stories" are available.

Thus, New Directions carries on as one



of the most interesting publishing houses in the country. Mr. Laughlin has found his last ten years packed with discovery, hope, and, on many occasions, headaches (as a remedy for which he takes off for the ski trails). He likes to think, however, that there will always be at least one or two houses which will publish for the sake of the book, and not for the sake of the profit, which he admits he has never made.

As an expression of this desire for publishing as a creative enterprise, he mentions James Farrell's "The Fate of Writing in America" which he published this spring as a 25-cent pamphlet. In it, Farrell raises the complaint of bigness in the industry, and asks for the maintenance of houses which can continue to remain small enough to be truly selective; energetic enough to assume the sponsorship of writers whose

immediate dividends to their publisher are not considered as important as their chances for ultimate recognition. He makes the point that this is in every respect a responsibility of the writer himself, as well as of the publisher.

The good books, thinks Mr. Laughlin, are not those which have a seasonal sale only, or which disappear quickly. The first novel ever published by New Directions is still in print; it is William Carlos Williams' "White Mule," and it still sells.

New Directions will publish in the coming season "Spearhead," an anthology which is intended to be an historical survey collection of ten years of experimental writing in America. The very title of the collection is an indication that the publisher is looking forward to the new years, as well as counting up the past ones.



*The board of strategy of New Directions. Left to right: Robert Lowry, editor, author, and designer; Hubert Creekmore, editor and writer; James Laughlin, the publisher; and Susan Lusting, business manager of the firm. Photo by Charles Meyer*



# Program notes . Maya Deren -

## RITUAL IN TRANSFIGURED TIME

Conceived and directed by Maya Deren  
Photographed by Hella Heyman.  
Choreographic collaboration, Frank West-  
brook  
Principal performers: Rita Christiani  
and Frank Westbrook

Nov. 1

### Notes on the film:

In addition to the immediate visual habits which are prevalent -- the search for the literary-narrative even in non-literary mediums, the confusion between image and symbol, etc., -- there is a larger visual, or rather psychological habit: the search for the romantic personality as the core of a work of art. We have grown up in a period marked by the concept of the personality as the prime value, whether in literature or painting; and this tendency, aided and abetted by popularized notions of psycho-analysis, has found its final expression in sur-realism.

I have called this new film RITUAL, not only because of the importance of the quality of movement ( as I suggested in the program notes) but because a ritual is characterized by the de-personalization of the individual. In some cases it is even marked by the use of masks and voluminous garments, so that the person of the performer is virtually anonymous; and it is marked, also, by the participation of the community, not as a series and an accumulation of personalities, in the romantic sense, but as a homogeneous entity in which the inner patterns of relationship between the elements create, together, a larger movement of the body as a whole. The intent of such a depersonalization is not the destruction of the individual; ~~on~~ the contrary, it enlarges him beyond the personal dimension, and frees him from the specializations and confines of "personality". A ~~xxx~~ ritual is classicist in nature. Its elements are so related and so combined as to act dynamically upon each other towards the creation of a form which, in turn, re-creates, re-defines, and re-evaluates the elements. It is a process with which today, the chemist, the physicist and the mathematician is most familiar. But it is the process, also, of much of great art, in which it is the tragedy which creates the tragic figure.

Elsewhere, in stressing the importance of the relationship of form to instrument, I have insisted that, out of a new instrument a new form must arise, and the dynamics of the relationship between elements in such a new form will be determined by the nature of the instrument with which it is achieved. In this film the dynamic is Time, not as an emptiness to be measured in terms of an activity -- whether that of a watch or of aging, -- but as an active creative element. For me ~~the radio, the airplane~~ there is no mere coincidence in the contemporaneousness of the motion-picture camera, the radio, the airplane and the relativistic concepts of physics, for all of these are time-machines, in a certain sense. Certainly the camera is unique, among art instruments, in its ability to itself create time -- not merely a sense of it -- but an actual period. It can create a time which is accelerated, attenuated or arrested. And it would seem to me to be an act of criminal neglect to fail to use this capacity in a creative effort in which the motion-picture camera is involved. I have tried, in this film, to use camera time as a creative element --



to create with it actions and events qualitatively composed of Time, and a ritual built of the dynamic relationships which it can achieve between elements.

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RITUAL IN TRANSFIGURED TIME is still another "abandoned film". My effort here has been to fuse into a total simultaneity the emotional inevitability of MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON, the spatial-temporal continuities of AT LAND and the visual inevitabilities of A STUDY IN CHOROGRAPHY FOR CAMERA, so that the emotional-psychological meanings are a function not only of the events in the larger terms of time and space, but also of the immediate visual quality of the image and its movement.

Ritual is an act whose very form is so principal an element of its purpose that it passes far beyond naturalism. In this sense, all art is ritualistic, for it is through form that the qualities of two and two may be so related  $\times$  in inspired equation as to create, by their dynamic inter-action, much more than four. It is for the achievement of more than four that, in its anthropological sense also, ritual is performed. And its purpose is always an inversion, a reversal towards life. Communal ritual and individual ordeal attend all critical metamorphoses: the passage from sterile winter to fertile spring; mortality into immortality; the child-son into the man-father; and the virgin, or even the widow, into the bride.



## **His Bitter Pill**

**1916**

**Produced by Mack Sennett for Triangle-Keystone. Cast: Mack Swain, Louella Maxam, Ella Haines, Edgar Kennedy.**

In 1916, the Western film was in its heyday and Bill Hart the idol of countless thousands. Since nothing was sacred to Mack Sennett and his studio-full of irreverent comedians, a skit on the Western film was hardly to be resisted. Sennett's unerring instinct for the genuinely comic here guided him away from his customary slapstick towards a delicate but devastating kind of satire. *His Bitter Pill* is apparently a genuine "Western", complete with heroic sheriff, villain, robbery and hard riding: but it is seen through an ingeniously distorted lens and the values are unerringly overemphasized or misplaced. The subtitles are pure mockery.

Mack Swain, who does a delicious bit of work as the hero, was an eminent member of the Keystone comedians, and afterwards played with Chaplin in his *The Gold Rush* and other films.



## **The Doctor's Secret (Hydrothérapie Fantastique)**

**c1900**

Produced, devised and directed by George Méliès. Cast: Unknown.

Films were made at first to amuse children and unsophisticated people. They were consequently a form of entertainment in which the spirit of comedy was free and unrefined. The pranks of naughty boys, the humors of undress and of obesity, physical mishaps of all kinds from a tumble to a stomach-ache were meat for the early movies. They employed every trick the camera is capable of—stop motion, rapid motion and slow motion—and developed every known kind of situation, even the impossible.

Georges Méliès, a French prestidigitator who made innumerable films between 1896 and 1914, combined with a rabelaisian sense of humor a gift for making films and for imagining new kinds of machinery. Both are apparent in this early film, somewhat clinical for present taste but, nevertheless, abounding in imagery and invention the equal of any modern painter's.

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**A Short Survey of the Film in America**

***The Talkies***

Although the film happened to develop independently of mechanically reproduced sound, there have been continual attempts since the earliest times to synchronize motion-pictures and sound. One variety of Edison's peepshow or kinetoscope included a phonograph; it was possible to listen through ear-phones to music while watching the primitive movies through the eye-piece. Among the minor attractions at the Paris Exposition of 1900 were crude talkies with phonograph records played in rough synchronization with the film on the screen: Coquelin could be seen and heard in a scene from *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

It was not until 1926 that talking films as we know them today loomed on the horizon. The student is referred to Arthur Edwin Krows' *The Talkies* (New York, Henry Holt, 1930) for an account of the part played by such pioneers as Bell, Lauste, De Forest, Case and the engineers of the General Electric, Westinghouse and Bell Laboratories. It was the results obtained by the last-named which attracted the interest of Sam and Harry Warner of Warner Brothers, first among the film producers to enter the new field. At the outset they seem to have been interested in the possibility of providing "canned" orchestral accompaniments for silent films, but, after months of laborious experiments at the old Flatbush Studios and later at the Manhattan Opera House, they gave a public performance on August 6, 1926 of some short musical and dialogue films as well as a full-length silent film, *Don Juan*, with a mechanically reproduced musical accompaniment. Then, in May, 1927, the Fox Film Corporation launched its Movietone Newsreel which comprised, as well as sound-film of current events, many interviews with eminent public figures of the day whose characteristic delivery, gestures and expression have thus been placed on record. An example of this special function of the new sound camera is included in the present program—a strangely revealing study of the Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw, acquired through the courtesy of Twentieth Century-Fox. Late in 1927, Warner Brothers' *The Jazz Singer*, with Al Jolson in the leading role, scored a hit. Thereafter cinemas all over the world were wired for sound, and film studios which had been waiting to see which way the cat jumped, one after another abandoned silent film production.



The first talking films were at least as crude as the primitive silent films of the 1890's. That freedom of movement which the camera had gradually won, and the fluidity of composition so admirable in the best silent films were both momentarily lost. The method of sound pickup was limited and could be used only indoors: actors had to stand still near the microphone while saying their lines, and a scene could only be cut when the talking was over. Visually then, the early talkies were pitifully lacking in interest. What made them so peculiarly tedious, however, was that no one then knew how to write for the talkies or how to speak before the camera and, as a result, early dialogue was dismal to hear.

Happily, a vital art can assimilate all sorts of new elements and the film, most vital among the arts of today, soon emerged from the doldrums of those early talkie days. Thanks to the technicians, the camera slowly regained its mobility. It became possible to work outdoors. Writers for the screen discovered how to create eloquent instead of merely articulate dialogue, and actors adapted themselves to the new conditions. In 1929 while a number of silent films were still current, talkies like *In Old Arizona* and *The Virginian* restored natural landscapes to the screen, while *Broadway Melody* and Chevalier's *Innocents of Paris* brought back a measure of spontaneity. By 1930, silent films had almost disappeared and in that year three foreign talkies exerted a helpful influence: they were *The Blue Angel*, *Zwei Herzen in ¾ Takt*, and *Sous les Toits de Paris*. It became apparent that sounds, or "noises off", and music were to become as important a part of the new films as audible dialogue; that speech in an unknown tongue could be just comprehensible enough; and, above all, that a film with dialogue must, just like a silent film, *move*.

## **The Jazz Singer**

**1927**

Produced by Warner Brothers Pictures. Directed by Alan Crosland. Cast: Al Jolson, May McAvoy, Warner Oland, Eugenie Besserer and others. Acquired through the courtesy of Warner Brothers Pictures.

Though so few years have elapsed since *The Jazz Singer* was made, it is difficult today to understand the sensation which it created. Even at the time, it is doubtful if anyone thought it a good film. The curiosity and interest it provoked, however, were largely responsible for the swift change from silent to talking films which followed.

*The Jazz Singer* was ten reels long, over two-thirds of it silent with printed subtitles. It relates the story of a Jewish boy disowned by his father for devoting himself to secular, instead of sacred, music. After winning consid-



erable success on the stage, the son returns to sing in the synagogue in place of his dying father, with whom he is belatedly reconciled.

Where the present excerpt begins at the end of the fourth reel, the hero returns home for the first time in years. Up to this point, the film has been silent. There follows a dialogue sequence while Jolson sings for his mother and carries on a conversation with her. As the father, still unrelenting, appears on the scene, the film again lapses into silence. Jolson is later heard three times in subsequent reels, but the rest of the film has been omitted from this program save for the famous scene at the end in which the actor sings "Mammy." It was this which sounded the death-knell of the silent film, for the song happened to possess an emotional or sentimental quality. The audience, in consequence, no longer saw the talking film merely as a curiosity but as, dimly, the means to a fuller expression of certain moods than the silent films appeared capable of registering.

The queer alternations of speech, or song, with silent pictures and subtitles make *The Jazz Singer* today seem even more archaic than *Queen Elizabeth* (1912). The acting is stilted and circumscribed, while Jolson's voice is anything but perfectly reproduced. There is little question that the film was an example, like the performance of Dr. Johnson's dog, of something being remarkable not because it was well done but because it had been done at all.

## **All Quiet on the Western Front**

**1930**

Produced by Universal Pictures. Directed by Lewis Milestone. Dialogue by Maxwell Anderson and George Abbott. Dialogue direction by George Cukor. Cast: *Katczinski*, Louis Wolheim; *Paul Baumer*, Lewis Ayres; *Himmelstoss*, John Wray; *the Frenchman*, Raymond Griffith; *Tjaden*, George "Slim" Summerville; *Muller*, Russell Gleason; *Albert*, William Bakewell; *Leer*, Scott Kolk; *Behm*, Walter Rogers; *Kemmerich*, Ben Alexander; *Peter*, Owen Davis, Jr.; *Kantorek*, Arnold Lucy; *Westus*, Richard Alexander; *Mrs. Baumer*, Beryl Mercer; *Detering*, Harold Goodwin. Acquired through the courtesy of Universal Pictures.

There is much more similarity between this film and Murnau's *Sunrise* of 1927 than between it and *The Jazz Singer* of 1927, or any of the talkies which had been made in the three intervening years. Here the camera once more moves along the trenches as freely as in *Sunrise* it moved through the rustic landscape. Speech which in earlier talkies had been carried on continuously occurs in *All Quiet* only in intimate scenes, which in silent films were punctuated with dialogue in the form of printed subtitles. Spacious scenes of



action are accompanied only by sounds—the screech of shells and the din of warfare. Similar sounds, long before the talkies appeared, had been customarily though perhaps less adequately supplied by the noise-machines which formed part of the equipment of orchestras in all large cinemas. What was remarkable about *All Quiet on the Western Front* at the time it was made was that not only did it employ spectacle and the moving camera, but also it was cut almost as freely as a silent film.

It is to the credit of Lewis Milestone, the director, and of Carl Laemmle, Sr., and his son, the producers, that this film utilized the new technical devices instead of being overwhelmed by them. The innate properties of cinematography here, though falteringly, once more reasserted themselves so early in the new era of sound-recording. It may well be that the printed subtitle was always an anomaly, and that we must thankfully pardon the crudities of early talkies since they at least effected its permanent disappearance.

The present version is a short one, for *All Quiet* originally consisted of thirteen reels, and this only of nine. Harrowing as the subject matter seemed in 1930, it has not become less poignant in later years and the present length creates as much emotional strain as most audiences care to undergo.

## Steamboat Willie

1928

Produced, designed and directed by Walt Disney. Acquired through the courtesy of Mr. Walt Disney.

This was the first Mickey Mouse to be shown publicly, though the Disneys, who had been turning out animated cartoons since 1920, had prepared an earlier one which was silent and which failed to secure exhibition. Mickey Mouse rushed in to success at a time when the human characters on the screen were still struggling under difficulties imposed by the new devices for recording speech and sound. His little figure had an immense advantage over them, for it kept moving—which was more than actors were able to do at that time of rigid cameras. Moreover, though Mickey never said much, yet he was perfectly eloquent. The brilliant use of sounds and of music as an integral part of each Disney cartoon, rather than as a mere accompaniment, constituted in 1928 a definite advance in sound-film technique and pointed the way to experiments in melding visual with audible content which have, even today, by no means reached an end.

Iris Barry

This is the last program of

Series I: A Short Survey of the Film in America, 1895-1930

Quintales film as an  
old form -



THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53 ST., NEW YORK

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DOCUMENTARY FILM

Daily 3 and 5:30 P. M.; Sundays & Holidays 1:30, 3:30 and 5:30; Thursday Nights 8:15

Now nearing the end of its first quarter-century of existence, the documentary film has had a turbulent existence, full of set-backs, punctuated by bold if hardly extravagant claims and marked throughout by the devotion and missionary spirit of its chief exponents. It long ago proved that in dealing with facts, not fantasies, this type of motion picture was ideally equipped to increase general knowledge, challenge opinions, and spread progressive thinking. Finally, during the war years it earned full recognition and to a degree hitherto undreamed, demonstrated its usefulness as an instrument of adult education.

The Museum of Modern Art has consistently and enthusiastically followed its whole development: to signal the end of its wartime phase, an extensive series of fifty-four programs was presented in its auditorium from the beginning of the year until mid-July. These summed up the history of the documentary film movement and indicated the many different levels upon which it operates, whether as simple record and information or, at its best and most complex, carrying a wealth of implications and ideas.

That the appetite for such films was no temporary matter during the recent years of emergency has been most amply proved by the very large attendance at these programs: much of the time and always at weekends it has reached or exceeded capacity. For this increasing — and critical — public which has thus so clearly demonstrated its taste for the film of facts and ideas, the series is now extended for two months, in part by a repetition of the best pictures already shown and in part by the addition of others recently added to the Museum's collection or — in the case of some — loaned for the occasion.

The Museum auditorium will be closed on July 15, 16 and 17 for the first time since the new building opened in 1939, to permit much-needed renovations.

## 1. JULY 18, 19, 20, 21

*Moana* (1926), directed and photographed by Robert Flaherty for Paramount Pictures.

As in the earlier *Nanook*, Flaherty far transcends the ordinary travel film by letting his camera dwell on a simple community, portraying his own conception of its idyllic existence in some — perhaps imaginary — past, and implying a criticism of the civilization which destroyed it.

## 2. JULY 22, 23, 24, 25

*H<sub>2</sub>O* (1929), photographed and edited by Ralph Steiner.

During the 'twenties many experimental films were made in Western Europe and — as in this almost abstract study of movement and texture — in America. At first undertaken as exercises in a newly recognised art-form, they increasingly tended to explore problems of contemporary society.

*Ten Days That Shook the World* (1927), directed by S. M. Eisenstein and G. V. Alexandrov, photographed by Edward Tisse.

At the same time, new methods of film editing and composition were evolved in Russia from American precedents, and introduced into a series of films which represented the salient events of the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 from a political, rather than a strict historical viewpoint.

Techniques both from Russian and experimental films were assimilated by the nascent documentary movement.

## 3. JULY 26, 27, 28

*Rien Que Les Heures* (1926), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti.

Primarily an experimental film, by its intimations of the contrasts in urban society this impressionistic account of a day in Paris already suggested the trend which later led its director to join the documentary film movement in London.

*Alvin* 14407 *Corbin*  
1967



**Berlin; The Symphony of A Great City (1926-7)**, directed by Walter Ruttmann.

Less bitter than the foregoing, this second city-poem also casts an eye upon the inequalities in urban existence while preserving some valuable period data.

#### 4. JULY 29, 30, 31, August 1

**Earth in Song (1933)**, directed and photographed by Karel Plicka, edited by Alexander Hackenschmied, music by Frantisek Skvor.

This Czecho-Slovakian picture, made by a native ethnologist among the peoples of the Carpathian mountains, has a lyrical intensity which lifts it far beyond mere scientific interest. It gives an early indication of the important part that music was to play in documentary.

#### 5. AUGUST 2, 3, 4

**The Wave (1934)**, produced and photographed by Paul Strand for the Department of Fine Arts, Secretariat of Education of the Mexican government, directed by Fred Zinnemann and Emilio Gomez Muriel, scenario by Henwar Rodakiewicz, edited by Gunther von Fritsch, music by Sylvestre Revueltas.

Again an illustration of the combined humane and aesthetic impulses which activated the documentary film. Here the facts were woven into a slight story to recount the efforts of Mexican fishermen to obtain a living wage: actors were employed as well as actual fishermen.

#### 6. AUGUST 5, 6, 7, 8

**Easter Island (1934)**, directed and photographed by John Ferno, music by Maurice Jaubert.

The monolithic statues for which this island is famed serve as a background for a study of its present-day inhabitants, dwelling in relapse and decay, many of them lepers. Commentary in French.

**Song of Ceylon (1934)**, produced by John Grierson, directed by Basil Wright, music by Walter Leigh.

Made for the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board though not an advertising film, this is rightly regarded as one of the masterpieces of documentary. First consistent effort to use sound in counterpoint to visuals, its mounting contrast between what is heard and what is seen, between Singhalese life today and what it once was, achieves a rich and sensual impression.

**L'Amitié Noire (1944)**, photographed and edited by François Villiers, narration spoken by Jean Cocteau.

Brilliant and tantalising glimpses of native life in French colonial Africa bring a strong new impression of these peoples. There is superb dancing and the experience culminates in a rally at which innumerable tribes affirm their loyalty to the mother country.

#### 7. AUGUST 9, 10, 11

**The River (1937)**, written and directed by Pare Lorentz, photographed by Willard Van Dyke, Stacy Woodard and Floyd

Crosby, music by Virgil Thomson, produced by the Farm Security Administration.

This government-sponsored film, like its predecessor *The Plow that Broke the Plains*, brought the documentary film into the limelight in America and lent conviction to the belief that this new medium of mass communication with its double impact on the senses was ideally suited to challenge opinion, make facts known, spread progressive ideas.

**The City (1939)**, directed by Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke, scenario by Henwar Rodakiewicz, editing by Theodore Lawrence, music by Aaron Copland.

A sharp enquiry into the problem of town-planning which has become the most popular of American documentaries. Three phases of community living are dealt with: the New England township, centered round church, school and store; the unplanned metropolis with its slums and turmoil; and — less effectively presented for lack of adequate examples — the new decentralized green-belt community.

#### 8. AUGUST 12, 13, 14, 15

**Land Without Bread (1932)**, directed by Luis Bunuel.

A study of the district of Las Hurdes near the Portuguese border of Spain, whose inhabitants — isolated in a barren and exhausted land — live in sub-human conditions. Earliest of its kind, haunting and beautiful in spite of its subject matter, this document by the director of the famed surrealist picture *Le Chien Andalou* indicated many of the future uses of film to provoke pity and indignation and extend anthropological knowledge.

**The Spanish Earth (1937)**, directed by Joris Ivens, photography by John Ferno, edited by Helen Van Dongen, commentary and narration by Ernest Hemingway, music arranged by Marc Blitzstein and Virgil Thomson.

Made in and around Madrid during the Spanish civil war, enacted by Loyalists living and fighting there, this fine and tragic if formless picture is moving as only the spectacle of history can be. With *The River*, *The Plow*, *The 400,000,000*, *The Wave* and *The City* it formed the basis of the American documentary movement.

#### 9. AUGUST 16, 17, 18

**Power and the Land (1940)**, produced by the Rural Electrification Administration and the Department of Agriculture, directed by Joris Ivens, photography by Floyd Crosby and Arthur Ornitz, commentary by Stephen Vincent Benet, music by Douglas Moore.

The daily life of an actual family on a Middle Western farm before and after electrical power is available locally.

**Valley Town (1940)**, produced jointly by the Educational Film Institute and Documentary Film Productions, Inc., directed by Willard Van Dyke, photography by Roger Barlow and Bob Churchill, edited by Irving Lerner, music by Marc Blitzstein.

This study of technological unemployment, one of a series on the subject made for the Sloan Foundation, is remarkable for its photography, its music and for its daring (though perhaps not wholly effective) use of soliloquy, even of sung soliloquy. A tragic view of an American industrial city in depression, like its English companion piece, *Eastern Valley*, it offers a partial solution to the bitter problem it examines.



## 10. AUGUST 19, 20, 21, 22

**The Fight for Life (1941)**, produced by the U.S. Film Service, written and directed by Pare Lorentz from the book by Paul de Kruif, photographed by Floyd Crosby, music by Louis Gruenberg.

This sharply compassionate film is a study at once of poverty in our cities and of a maternity clinic in one of them, seen in dramatic terms of the mothers themselves and of the doctors who care for them. Employing some actors as well as plain citizens, this realistic plea was not made without opposition nor has it been seen as widely as it deserved. The sequence in which a young doctor walks through the city, troubled by the conditions about him, is particularly effective, as are the music and the sound effects throughout.

## 11. AUGUST 23, 24, 25

Instructional pictures have sometimes satisfied teachers or film lovers but seldom both. Often they are acceptable academically but cinematically dull, so that children — who are movie-minded — turn up their noses at them. Or, competent as films and even as exposition they fail to fit classroom requirements.

This group of pictures has been collected as the pick of the crop to suggest what happy results might accrue were educators to insist that only competent film-makers be engaged to make teaching films: it is repeated in the series because it proved so exceptionally popular.

**Die Steinernen Wunder Von Naumburg (1935)**, produced by Deutsche-Universal, directed by R. Bamberger and C. Oertel.

The "feeling" of the sculptures and of the cathedral at Naumburg in Saxony is suggested by striking camera work and by music of Johann Sebastian Bach, played on the organ by Prof. Fritz Heitman. The film is primarily impressionist, it does not identify the sculptures nor describe the conditions under which they were made.

**Van Eyck's "Adoration of the Lamb" (1937)**, directed by André Cauvin.

Here the camera is used as a magical eye for seeing and studying the detail of a painting, in this case the great 15th century Flemish masterpiece.

**La Lettre (1938)**, produced by Marcel de Hubsch for Atlantic Film, directed by Jean Mallon, music by Jean Wiener.

The development of lettering from Roman capitals through cursive to Renaissance and modern type: a charming if not exact essay.

**The Transfer of Power (1939)**, produced by Arthur Elton for the Petroleum Films Bureau.

A brilliantly clear exposition of the historical development of means of transferring power, from the simple lever through the wheel and pulley to the modern gear. Produced for an oil company, this film has become noted for the imaginative parallel it draws between the progress of mechanical invention and the development of civilization at large. Diagrams are employed to simplify the technical intricacies.

**Sweeney Steps Out (1941)**, directed by Joseph Krumbold, edited by Henwar Rodakiewicz, narration by John Kieran.

Though the young hero's adventures take place in the Bronx Zoo, it is not nature study but courage and loyalty which he learns there.

**Cold Front (1943)**, produced by Walt Disney Studios for the Bureau of Aeronautics, U.S. Navy.

One of a series of color cartoons dealing with aerology, using animation and models but no animal or human figures, and typifying the best of the strictly educational shorts made by Disney.

**The Grain That Built A Hemisphere (1943)**, produced by the Walt Disney Studios for the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

The romantic history and the life cycle of maize, simply and well told in color animation — an example of the non-humorous cartoons that Disney has made for government offices during the war, opening new possibilities in educational pictures.

## 12. AUGUST 26, 27, 28, 29

**The Bridge (1942)**, directed by Willard Van Dyke and Ben Maddow, produced for the Foreign Policy Association.

A review of the economics of South America, with particular reference to inter-trade relations between its countries and North America, and to the importance of communications and aerial transportation to the hemisphere in the future.

**High Plain (1943)**, produced by Julien Bryan and Jules Bucher in Bolivia for the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

A study of the ways of an Indian community, far removed in style and content from the superficial travelogue.

**High Over the Borders (1941)**, directed and written by Irving Jacoby, edited by John Ferno, produced by the National Film Board of Canada for the New York Zoological Society.

A beautifully made film on the facts and mysteries of bird migration in this hemisphere, with overtones that reflect on human affairs.

## 13. AUGUST 30, 31, SEPTEMBER 1

In providing films to be shown abroad which would represent the American scene, as illustrated in this and the subsequent program, the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information notably continued the tradition of documentary established in the previous decade. Where most of the government's other war-time films were made by men in the armed forces who had previously worked in Hollywood studios and have now returned there, this office drew upon directors, writers, editors and cameramen already eminent in the documentary field and permanently devoted to it.

**A Better Tomorrow (1945)**, directed, edited by Alexander Hackenschmied.

*The Land - film*



New York's public school system, from grade to high, is reviewed here. It is made meaningful by its management of a difficult if very human subject, for its concern is with the children themselves, with what learning means to them as future citizens. The music by Alex North is especially delightful and apposite.

X **The Cummington Story (1945)**, directed by Helen Grayson and Larry Madison, musical score by Aaron Copland, edited by Sidney Meyers.

A real situation in a real New England town is re-enacted by the actual participants, and furnishes as unaffected and moving a sermon against insularity and intolerance as could well be imagined. Incidentally it provides an intimate portrait of life in rural America.

**The Capital Story (1945)**, produced and written by Irving Jacoby, directed by Henwar Rodakiewicz, music by Henry Brandt.

Detective work, carried out by personnel of the U.S. Department of Health in its laboratories, traces the source of a harmful ingredient in a process employed in a ship-building yard, thus by this small instance making real the functions and services of a government agency to the nation and to the individual.

**The Window Cleaner (1945)**, directed and photographed by Jules Bucher, scenario by Joseph March.

A thumb-nail sketch of Manhattan, as seen by the man who keeps its skyscrapers sparkling.

## 14. SEPTEMBER 2, 3, 4, 5

**Northwest U.S.A. (1944)**, directed by Willard Van Dyke.

A regional portrait, with emphasis on the development of the Grand Coulee dam, the industrial and agricultural development of the area and its future.

**Tuesday in November (1945)**, produced by John Houseman, directed by John Berry, music by Virgil Thomson.

The electoral system explained in terms of people but elucidated by the simplest possible diagrams.

**The Autobiography of a Jeep (1943)**, produced and written by Joseph Krumgold, edited by Gene Fowler, Jr.

Mass production seen with humor, and a bit of genuine Americana.

**The Library of Congress (1945)**, produced by Irving Lerner, directed by Alexander Hackenschmied.

The extent and purpose of this great institution is clearly defined, and much of its inner operation, its field work, its services to music and the fine arts as well as to literature and to the preservation of priceless records, is shown in action.

## 15. SEPTEMBER 6, 7, 8

**A Place To Live (1941)**, directed by Irving Lerner, scenario by Muriel Rukeyser, photography by Roger Barlow, music by David Diamond.

Made for the Philadelphia Housing Association, this short

examines the slums of the city and the price paid in human terms for such living conditions.

**When We Build Again (1945)**, produced by Strand Films for Cadbury Bros., directed by Ralph Bond.

A discussion of their needs by three returning soldiers opens this account of housing and town-planning in England as envisaged in a film made for the big chocolate-manufacturing firm which was responsible for an early "ideal" suburb.

**Housing in Scotland (1945)**, produced by Merlin for the Ministry of Information, directed by Gilbert Gunn.

Before V-E day, work on films concerning reconstruction were already being made in Great Britain: this one recalls Scotland's honorable record in pioneer housing schemes and gives details of its immediate future in the field.

## 16. SEPTEMBER 9, 10, 11, 12

**What's Happened to Sugar? (1946)**, produced by the Sugar Foundation for the Office of Price Administration, directed by David Flaherty.

The answer to this question proves to be an unusually complex one, and furnishes some surprising information.

**Hidden Hunger (1942)**, produced by American Film Center for Swift and Co., directed by Joseph Krumgold and Henwar Rodakiewicz.

Verging on the dramatic form, this short employs humor and fantasy to stress the importance of a proper diet and explains its constituents.

X **World of Plenty (1945)**, produced by Paul Rotha for the Ministry of Information, written by Eric Knight, diagrams by the Isotype Institute, music by William Alwyn.

The novel approach and technique of this film on nutrition, the natural voices that argue and discuss the topic within its framework, its forthrightness and breadth of vision all combine to make this one of the most important documentaries made during the war.

## 17. SEPTEMBER 13, 14, 15

**The Battle of San Pietro (1945)**, produced by the Army Pictorial Service, directed by Major John Huston, photographed by Captain Jules Buck and Signal Corps cameramen.

Unlike most other war films this one went beyond the factual account of an engagement or campaign to suggest profounder human implications, aftermaths and experiences.

**The Last Shot (1946)**, directed by John Ferno.

Made for release in Great Britain and not intended for audiences elsewhere, this excellent film gives an impressive idea of the devastation of Holland, of the problems to be faced in reconstruction and — above all — of the courage of its people.

**The Pale Horseman (1946)**, written and produced by Irving Jacoby, edited by Peter Elgar, music by Henry Brant.

World devastation, famine and the threat of pestilence: and why it is in our own self-interest to combat them, whether through UNRRA or other means.



*Repeat Performance:*

# THREE ABANDONED FILMS

A work is never completed,  
but merely abandoned.

Paul Valéry

**Tuesday, March 19, 1946**

at the Provincetown Playhouse, 133 Mac Dougal St., New York.  
Complete program repeated at 7:45, 9:00 and 10:15 (no one  
admitted during the running of films). Tickets \$1.00 incl. tax.  
Advance purchase recommended; write Hella Heyman, 69 Perry  
Street, New York 12, (CH 2-7350). Indicate preferred hour.



## **PROGRAM:**

### **MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON**

by Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid (1943)

A film concerned with the inner realities of an individual and with the way in which the subconscious will develop an apparently casual occurrence into a critical emotional experience.

### **A STUDY IN CHOREOGRAPHY FOR CAMERA**

by Maya Deren and Tally Beatty (1945)

Together, the dancer and space perform a dance which cannot exist but on film.

### **AT LAND**

Conceived and directed by Maya Deren. Technical assistance: Hella Hamon and Alexander Hammid. (1944)

A film in the nature of an inverted Odyssey, where the universe assumes the initiative of movement and confronts the individual with a continuous fluidity towards which, as a constant identity, he seeks to relate himself.



Man cannot duplicate the infinite intricacy of the living architecture of the wheat stalk. Nature is best capable of its own forms and of the complex inevitabilities which result in such marvelous phenomena. Man himself is such a phenomenon; and the marvelous in man is his creative intelligence, which transcends nature and creates out of it un-natural forms. In his art—whether architecture or poem—he does not reproduce a given reality; nor does he simply express his immediate reactions of pleasure and pain. He starts with the elements of that reality—the stone, the city, the other man—and relates them into a new reality which, no sooner achieved, becomes itself an element in his next manipulation. In his effort to achieve form he may produce shapes monstrous or divine; but his proud ambition is to create, in the image of his own intelligence, a reality man-made.

In cinema, such a concept of creative action has been neglected. The analogy between the lens and the eye, based on the physical similarity between them, has led to a recording of the forms of reality and those of literature, drama and painting. But cinema, to be creative, must do more than record. The mechanism behind the lens, like the brain behind the eye, can evaluate the objects before it, can decide them attractive or repulsive, casual or surprising. Above all, the analogy must be extended to understand that the strip of film is the memory of the camera. Just as man is not content to merely reconstruct an original chronology, but in his art, conceives new relationships between remembered elements, so the film-maker can create new realities by the manipulation of the celluloid memories at his disposal.

The labor to achieve inspired, intelligent form is a single continuity, a work in progress which is eventually interrupted when the dynamic consciousness which it reflects ceases. From time to time one may pause to give integrated shapes to a stage of one's progress, in order to best pursue it further. And so these films have each been brought to an end, in order to be the better abandoned.

MAYA DEREN



" . . . So much of our experience is translated into images, which neither music nor literature nor even painting at times can approximate. Maya Deren . . . with her faculty for clear dreaming, for extracting the essential from our unconscious flow . . . accomplishes such a transcription deftly, with a great sense of the significance of the moving picture as a new medium. . . . "

—ANNA NIN

" . . . Miss Deren's approach to the dance film has long been awaiting discovery by some such sensitive artist. Heretofore, the dance has either been filmed unimaginatively as a straight record of a stage performance, or, on the other hand, has been cut up and distorted to make a cameraman's holiday. In her approach, we have the beginnings of a virtually new art of "chorecinema" in which the dance and the camera collaborate on the creation of a single work of art. . . . "

—JOHN MARTIN

Dance critic, New York Times.

" . . . These . . . films take excellent strides toward a type of personal expression in cinema analogous to the lyric poem . . . and deserve the careful study of those who consider that movies can be an art . . . "

—PARKER TYLER

Author of Hollywood Hallucination

" . . . Of all the work of young artists that I have had the opportunity of seeing, I have come upon few who show such promise . . . "

—JEAN BENOIT-LEVY

Director of La Maternelle, Ballerina.

" . . . In the films of Maya Deren, the images are chained to each other on the level of emotional, visual and logical implication with the same compelling inevitability which governs the development of the underlying subconscious drama. Thus, once the spectator surrenders to the logic of her universe, it emerges as a consistent, ordered, and above all, a powerfully convincing reality . . . "

—GEORGE AMBERG, Curator of  
the Dept. of Dance & Theater Design,  
Museum of Modern Art.



**The Film in Germany and in France**

**Program**

**1**

***The Film in Germany—Legend and Fantasy***

In Germany as elsewhere, the first films to be made were simple records of everyday scenes, vaudeville turns or improvised comic incidents. As narrative developed, German production seems for a time to have imitated French and, more particularly, Italian films but without any particular distinction. It was under the influence of Danish films that, after 1910, melodrama with Latin gesticulations and eye-rolling gave place to a subtler dramatic structure and style of acting. But it was not until 1913 that a film appeared which can be regarded as the first of that long succession of productions which placed Germany in a position of importance in the world cinema. This was the first *Student of Prague*, made by the eminent stage-actor, Paul Wegener.

From that time on, the film in Germany was to develop by absorbing elements already introduced on the German stage. But the men who were to play such an important part in its history came from the experimental theatre and not, as in America, from the popular theatre nor, as with Bernhardt in France and Irving in England, were they merely celebrities briefly conferring prestige on the lowly cinema. They included Reinhardt and Jessner themselves, as well as younger men; they were familiar with contemporary movements in the other arts; they approached the film with curiosity as a medium through which contemporary theories could be expressed. As a result, the German film was able to introduce any number of innovations which have since been incorporated into the general body of cinematographic technique while, at the same time, it evinced a certain amount of self-consciousness and of artifice and has never, at its best, been popular either in intention or in content in that wide sense in which Western films and Sennett comedies were popular.

At the moment that the approach to the film had been determined by this incursion from the art-theatre first by Wegener and then by Reinhardt, the outbreak of war and the blockade provided a tremendous impetus to production. Unable to obtain any films from without, save from Denmark, Germany was now forced to supply for herself films of propaganda and of entertainment for the army in the field and the public at home. Subsidies were forthcoming, studios were built or enlarged. It was during this war period that the foundations of that brilliant studio craftsmanship were laid and that collective experience acquired which were to flower in the "great period" of 1919 to 1925. Before the end of the war almost all of those who gained world fame later were already at work—designers of sets, cameramen and scenarists, as well as the directors Murnau, Dupont, Lubitsch and Wiene and actors like Jannings, Krauss, Veidt, Kortner and Negri.



Perhaps even more important, when the war was over the film continued to be regarded as a necessary and important commodity, production continued to be subsidized and the output of the studios to be designed not only for consumption at home but as a vehicle for rehabilitating German prestige abroad. This circumstance undoubtedly permitted some experiments and some extravagances which would have been impossible had the making of films been inspired by purely mercantile considerations.

Almost all the German films of the "great period" fall into three distinct groups in each of which—no matter what other elements they incorporate—the influence of the contemporary theatre is evident. They were (a) fantastic or macabre films in which an expressionist decor plays an important part and the subject is often derived from old legends or ballads; (b) historical-costume films in which architectural settings, careful costuming and romantic lighting, as well as the handling of massed crowds, suggest Reinhardt at every turn and in which history—usually ex-enemy history—is treated with considerable freedom. These were the most popular and on the whole the least excellent of the post-war German films. A third group, (c) intimate studies of low life, of depression and suffering, will be considered in detail in the next program.

### **Skladanowsky Primitives**

**1896-**

Acquired through the courtesy of the Reichsfilmkammer.

There were animated pictures of various kinds long before the invention of cinematography. The pioneer Skladanowsky shows some of them here, as well as examples of the very early films which he and his brothers made. The subtitles cannot be translated without losing their period flavor.

### **Don Juan's Wedding (Don Juan Heiratet)**

**1909**

Produced by Messter-Film. Directed by Oskar Messter with Joseph Giampietro as Don Juan. Acquired through the courtesy of the Reichsfilmkammer.

Messter seems to have been the first man to exhibit films in Germany. Though he began by importing Louis Lumière's pictures, he soon began to produce for himself and turned out a considerable proportion of Germany's pre-war films.

### **Misunderstood (Verkannt)**

**c1912**

Producer and director unknown, probably Messter. Acquired through the courtesy of the Reichsfilmkammer.

A favorite with moviegoers from her début in 1909, Henny Porten, who appears here as Anna, grew up with the film and remains to this day the most popular actress in Germany.



• - Fischinger -

Color reel

- in sequence -

allegretto

stars and stripes  
circles  
composition in blue

~~Black and white~~

study #5

study #6

study #7

study #8

study #11

Coloratura

Time

Maya Deren - start 9:45

Time

Three Black & White - } 10 min.  
Fischinger Studies - }

Überfall - 22 minutes

~~Color~~  
allegretto

Circle

Composition

Rhythm in Light

} 15 min.

Maya Deren -  $\frac{47}{18 \text{ min.}}$   

---

65

got extra tickets  
Deren's notes -

$\frac{10}{\cancel{47}} \quad 22 \quad 15 \quad 18$   

---

65



Leopold Surwege - unproduced abstract film  
projected by the artist in 1913 -

---

Rotha, Paul - The Film till now - p 59-62

Seldes, Gilbert - New Republic 48:95-6 - Sept. 15, 1926  
(on the abstract movie as the possible source of a  
more advanced visual idiom which might  
obviate literary ~~material~~ narrative in the  
development of plot and narrative.

New Republic 58:71-2 March 6, 1929

Spottiswoode, Raymond J - a grammar of the film -  
F86-7: 297-8

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Movie Makers 4: 573, 599-600 Sept 1929

Herman G. Weinberg - Movie Makers 4: 866-7 879-81  
Jan 1929

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Film art (London) John S. Woods 3: no 7: 11-16, 1926

---

Julien Levy - Surrealism p 63-88.

---

Lequene, C.A. Cinema - p 202-7

---

Movie Makers - Standard Oil Library



Überfall —

Close up (London) 5:14-16 May 1929

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Le Sang d'un poète (1930) A surrealist film of a poet's spiritual life and his conflict with society. Written, directed and produced by Jean Cocteau. Photography by Georges Perinal. Music by Georges Auric. With Enrique Rivero, Lee Miller, Odette Talayac.

Museum of M.A. Bulletin 1: no. 4 Dec 1, 1933

National Board of Review magazine 9: 4-9 — Feb. 1934 — Cocteau — contends that a symbolic film should evoke individual reactions rather than a general meaning.

Film Society Programme (London) April 2, 1933

Troy, William — Nation 137:577-8 November 15 1933

---

Rien que les heures (1926) presents events of a single day in Paris Directed by Alberts Cavalcanti

But whereas the earlier men experimented with moving form alone, Fischinger used the rhythms and tonalities of musical compositions ~~to~~ <sup>from</sup> which to launch his ~~visual~~ optical rhythms, creating a sort of visible interpretation of the music.



Seashell and the Clergyman (1928) Germaine Dular,  
644A — An experimental study of the  
46B conscious and subconscious thoughts  
274B engendered in a clergyman's mind by  
631A his suppression of natural impulses.  
639A

3 reels — Directed by Germaine Dular.  
Scenarios by ~~Art~~ Antonin Artaud.  
Photographed by Paul Guichard

Transition (Paris) no 19-20: 63-9 June 1930

Close up (London) 5:399-402 November 1929

Film Society programme (London) March 16, 1930

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Symphonie Diagonale (1918-1920) Germany

An absolute film — Directed and produced  
by Viking Eggeling —

Close up (London) 1:80 December 1927

Film Society programme (London) October 6, 1927

---

Überfall (1929, Germany) a socio-psychological  
study of an innocent man who, finding a spurious  
coin in the street, is pursued relentlessly by fate and  
circumstance to a tragic end. Written by Ernst  
Mitzner (and directed) and Grace Chiang.  
Photographed by Hans Casparius  
With Tibor Halmai, Emre Radoy, Sybille Schmitz  
Hans Casparius, Ernst Mitzner.



7-28

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20 min

Louis C. Jacobs

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(Butte's films) "Synchronization"  
His own films. Mary Ellen Butte  
& Kenneth

Hilla Rubay for Eggeling (Riesling)



Len Lye

791 Lennox Ave

W 4 C

American non-objective

Whitney

Grant (?)

Frank intro:

+

Butte

Henrich

Jacobs (?)

"Film Photo League"

"Exp. cinema" to document-  
tary - Strand, etc.

(Water film(?))

Crookwell

Rebony



# AMERICA'S FIRST SURREALIST Film Program

From

THE NEW YORK TIMES

December 21, 1941

"THESE ARE PICTURES WHICH LASH THE SENSES WITH STRANGE AND DISTORTED IMAGES AND, IN THAT MANNER, STIMULATE RESPONSES SUCH AS YOU NEVER GET FROM ORDINARY FILMS. THE BRAINIER ASPECTS OF THE CINEMA....A MOST ENTERPRISING AND REFRESHING STUNT. MOST INTERESTING AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING FARE..... A DELIGHTFULLY NOVEL PROGRAM RECOMMENDED TO ALL FILMGOERS WHO ARE LOOKING FOR A BREAK FROM THE ROUTINE."

"WE GUARANTEE THAT, IN THE AGGREGATE, THESE FILMS WILL ENERGIZE THE MIND OF ANY ONE WHO REACTS TO OFF-CENTER CONCEPTIONS. THIS PROGRAM WILL EITHER MAKE YOU LAUGH OR MAKE YOU THINK. AND THEY TOSS OFF COUNTLESS INTERESTING SUGGESTIONS WHICH COULD WELL BE SWIPED BY BOYS IN HOLLYWOOD."

--BOSLEY CROWTHER  
Motion Picture Editor  
New York Times.

## (Advance Announcement to Press)

The management of the ...theatre announces a Festival of Surrealist and Fantastic Films to start.....The Festival Program is a unique concoction of 4 esoteric films, representing the unusual and experimental efforts of avant-garde filmmakers during the past decade. Each of the films included in this program is designed to shock the senses and disturb one emotionally.

The program, slated for an indefinite run, includes: "The Blood of a Poet", "Lot in Sodom", "Object Lesson" and "Carmen", and takes roughly 2 1/2 hours.

"The Blood of a Poet" is a poem on celluloid, conceived and executed by JEAN COCTEAU, one of the foremost exponents of surrealism, who believed that the motion picture provided an unequalled opportunity for the expression of pure poetic thought, and whose voice provides the weird narrative to this cinemalange of hands, stars, lips, marble statues, angels, keys, gloves and snow. "Lot in Sodom", a symbolic and imaginative interpretation of the Biblical story, written and directed by Dr. J. Sibley Watson, Jr. and Melville Webber, is an attempt to prove that the film can be more than a mirror of reality. It is intended as an example of lyricism in the cinema.

"Object Lesson", the first American produced surrealist featurette, which took its producer CHRISTOPHER YOUNG several years to make, employs incongruous combinations of objects for the purpose of telling its story impressionistically. "Carmen", Charlie Chaplin's burlesque on the opera, and his first feature film, completes the program and has been added as comedy relief to assuage spectators who find surrealism a little too exhausting.

AMERICA'S FIRST SURREALIST Film Program

A Shockingly Stimulating  
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Jean Cocteau's "BLOOD of a POET"

also Charlie Chaplin's "CARMEN"

also "LOT in Sodom"

also OBJECT LESSON

AD MAT #1 (58 lines x 3 col.)

AMERICA'S FIRST SURREALIST Film Program

Jean Cocteau's "BLOOD of a POET"

also "LOT in Sodom"

also "OBJECT LESSON"

also Charlie Chaplin's "CARMEN"

AD MAT #4 (15 lines x 2 col.)

1st SURREALIST Film Program

BLOOD OF A POET

LOT IN SODOM

OBJECT LESSON

CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S CARMEN

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Jean Cocteau's "BLOOD of a POET"

also "LOT in Sodom"

also "OBJECT LESSON"

also Charlie Chaplin's "CARMEN"

AD MAT. #3 (50 lines x 2 col.)

Distributed Nationally by  
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## A SHOCKINGLY STIMULATING 2 1/2 HOUR EXPERIENCE

Jean Cocteau's  
BLOOD of a POET

also  
OBJECT LESSON

also  
LOT IN SODOM

also  
Charlie Chaplin's "CARMEN"

→ I THE  
Blood of a Poet



Direction and scenario: JEAN COCTEAU

Music: Georges Auric

Photography: George Perinal

This picture was conceived, directed and produced by Jean Cocteau. It is his voice which provides the weird narrative that intersperses this "poem on celluloid." Cocteau believes that the motion picture medium provides an unequalled opportunity for the expression of pure poetic thought. For the past twenty years his influence has been felt in various aesthetic movements, and he has experimented in all forms of self-expression. It is only natural that he should not have left unexplored the possibilities of the modern screen.

Although Cocteau is at once a playwright, a novelist, a draughtsman, a sculptor, a choreographer, an essayist, and even a philosopher, he calls himself a poet and his film "Le Sang d'un Poete," should be considered as essentially the visual transcription of a poem. The audience is invited to participate with the thoughts, moods, atmosphere created by the author. As in a written poem every image, every rhythm, the very choice of the language, so to speak, tend to bring out the poetical content of reality.

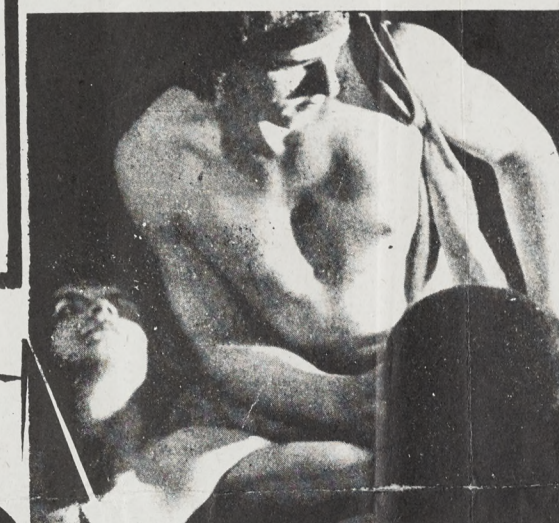
Like many poets Cocteau moves in a world of symbols and objects grown familiar to him, as if these objects and symbols were poetical condensers—hands, stars, hearts, marble statues, angels, keys, gloves, snow, are some of the pass words of his universe. They will be found in this picture and will serve as landmarks to those already familiar with Cocteau's books, his plays or his drawings.

Cocteau translates his curious and frenetic concepts of human experience. The film, he writes, "is a realistic document composed of unreal happenings." It is shown in four sections. 1. The Wounded Hand, or the Poet's Scars. 2. Do Walls Have Ears? 3. The Battle of the Snowballs. 4. The Profanation of the Host. George Auric, who wrote the score for Rene Clair's "A Nous La Liberte" composed the brilliant musical accompaniment.

Whether you consider this picture Mr. Cocteau's biography, a design for the artistic career, a commentary on present day life, or a critique of underlying realities, you will find it definitely intriguing.

## Running Time:

- 1— BLOOD OF A POET 51 minutes
- 2— LOT IN SODOM 27 minutes
- 3— OBJECT LESSON 12 minutes
- 4— CARMEN 41 minutes



Lot  
in  
Sodom

Produced, written and directed by  
J. SIBLEY WATSON, JR.  
and MELVILLE WEBBER  
Score by  
LOUIS SIEGEL

"Lot in Sodom" is taken from the old testament narrative and tells the story of that wicked city of the plains upon which God sent destruction, and of the saving of the good man Lot. The debauched people of Sodom indulge in frenzied orgies. Their voluptuous faces and sensual bodies fuse into a Bacchanal revelry. Only Lot with the elders prays for his sinful people. On returning from the temple he is visited by an angel but the angry young Sodomites resent the stranger. Lot tries to appease them and offers his daughter as a sacrifice. To make the young men purge their evil souls Lot evokes as a symbol of purity the majestic and inspiring beauty of human childbirth. The Sodomites ignore Lot's warning and he flees with his wife and daughter, as the city crumbles and Sodom burns. Lot's wife makes the fatal mistake of looking back—and she is turned to stone.

This picture, like "The Passion of Joan of Arc," offers an example of lyricism in the cinema. Its method is a rhythmical arrangement of symbols rather than a chronological development of action. With an accumulative intensity of feeling it reduces the Biblical story to its essential imaginative symbols. The director is the poet, and these smoking plains, fluctuating shapes, tongues of fires, melted together in unusual rhythms, constitute his personal vision of the destruction of Sodom.



Object  
Lesson

THE FIRST AMERICAN  
PRODUCED SURREALIST  
FILM, CREATED BY  
CHRISTOPHER YOUNG

"Let us consider objects for they tell the story of life. There is no thing without meaning and the combination of things make new meanings that are too complicated to explain!"  
—CHRISTOPHER YOUNG

Carmen



Chaplin's version of the popular opera is pure burlesque that approaches the fantastic in its satirical slapstick comedy. It was Chaplin's first feature and stars his old favorites of the keystone days, Edna Purviance, Ben Turpin and Leo White.